UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Doctoral Thesis

UAB
Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona

Relationship between Personality Factors, Identity Statuses, Meaning and Purpose in Life in Asylum Seekers

Samaneh Jamshidi

Department of Clinical and Health Psychology

PhD in Clinical and Health Psychology

Professor Doctor Montserrat Gomà-i-Freixanet

Universitat Autònòma de Barcelona

February 2023

In the memory of my uncle,

all other post-traumatic victims of Iran and Iraq war,

all victims of war at any time in different corners of the world,

specially, little children who are extremely suffering in Afghanistan!

I am so sorry that I do not have the courage to be in a country like Afghanistan and heal the emotional wounds of mothers and children who are suffering every day, but I wish and hope that my works with asylum seekers, this dissertation, and my future efforts, support and empower many war victims!

"There was a question that made me suffer most, and I still suffer badly after more than 15 years, as I cannot find the answer yet:

Why did I have to take a weapon in hand to kill a young man like me, who is forced to be there like me, and his mother's heart is anxiously beating to have him back home, as my mother's does."

Hossein Jamshidi, Iran, April, 2000

Acknowledgements

First of all, I take the opportunity to highly appreciate my director, who dedicated her time, knowledge and wisdom on me, far more than her professional duty, and empowered me in taking the encounters of studying on asylum seekers. Our mentor-student relationship not only enriched my knowledge in psychology, but also opened my horizons in other aspects of the life.

I also appreciate all the people in Gilan Province (Iran) and in Berlin (Germany) who supported me in collecting data for my study.

Special thanks to my husband for his encouragements, practical supports in collecting data in Berlin (Germany), and sharing his knowledge and experiences in working with asylum seekers.

Special appreciations to my brother for his mental supports, practical assistance in collecting data in Gilan Province (Iran), and providing me knowledge and skills in writing this thesis in English.

I highly appreciate my parents for their love, attention and intellectual supports that gave me the strength to follow my dreams, change my field to psychology and complete my studies in this area which gives my life more meaning.

My special thanks to my little daughter, that watching her innocence made me even more sensitive about the impeccability and vulnerability of all children who are victims of wars and displacements.

I dream a day, in which there is no war, no human rights violations, no victims, and no forced displacement!

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
16PF	Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire
A	Agreeableness
APA	American Psychological Association
BCE	Before the Christian Era
C	Conscientiousness
CAQ	Clinical Analysis Questionnaire
CEEAH	Committee for Human and Animal Experimentation
DIDS-2	Dimensions of Identity Development Scale
DSM-5	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition
E	Extraversion
EOM-EIS-2	Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status
EPQ	Eysenck Personality Questionnaire
FFM	Five-Factor Model
FFT	Five-Factor Theory
IBM SPSS	International Business Machines Corporation Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
ISI	Identity Style Inventory
MLQ	Meaning in Life Questionnaire
MLQ-P	Presence of Meaning dimension
MLQ-S	Search for Meaning dimension
MMPI	Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory
N	Neuroticism
NEO-FFI	Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Five Factor Inventory
NEO-PI	Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Personality Inventory
NEO-PI-R	The Revised Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Personality Inventory
O	Openness
OMEIS-2	Identity Status Questionnaire
PANAS	Impact of Positive and Negative Affect
PIL	Purpose in Life Questionnaire
PMI	Personal Meaning Index
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
SoMe	Sources of Meaning and Meaningfulness Questionnaire
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Abstract

Most asylum seekers have experienced identity challenges in their journey towards a more dignified life. Research shows that those who better overcome difficulties and find their place in the host society are those who successfully identify themselves and find new meaning and purposes in life. This research was designed to investigate the relationship between Personality, Ego Identity Status, and Meaning and Purpose in Life. The sample consisted of two different groups, but with the same language, culture and religion: One living in Iran ($n = 192$, $M = 29,10$ yrs.) and the other in Berlin ($n = 169$, $M = 29,02$ yrs.) as asylum seekers. We administered the NEO-FFI, the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS-2), the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Purpose in Life (PIL) questionnaire. Results showed that both groups did not significantly differ on their personality profiles but they differed on Identity Foreclosure, Presence of Meaning and Purpose in Life. Moreover, in the asylum seekers, personality contributed to the prediction of certain identity statuses and meaning and purpose in life variables. We concluded that when it comes to designing successful integration programs, psychologists have to consider personality to empower asylum seekers to achieve a healthier identity, and to find new meanings and purposes in the host society.

Key Words: Asylum Seeker, Personality, Ego Identity Status, Meaning in Life, Purpose in Life.

Resumen

La mayoría de los solicitantes de asilo han tenido retos de identidad en su periplo hacia una vida más digna. La literatura muestra que aquellos que mejor superan las dificultades y hallan su lugar en la sociedad de acogida son aquellos que se identifican mejor a sí mismos y encuentran nuevos sentidos y propósitos. Este estudio fue diseñado para investigar la relación entre Personalidad, Estatus de Identidad del Ego, y Sentido y Propósito en la Vida. La muestra consistió en dos grupos diferentes, pero con la misma lengua, cultura y religión: uno vivía en Irán ($n = 192$, $M = 29,10$ años) y otro en Berlín ($n = 169$, $M = 29,02$ años) como solicitante de asilo. Administramos el NEO-FFI, la Medida Objetiva de los Estatus de Identidad del Ego (EOM-EIS-2), y los cuestionarios Sentido (MLQ) y Propósito en la vida (PIL). Los resultados mostraron que ambos grupos no se diferenciaron significativamente en sus perfiles de personalidad, pero sí en Difusión de la Identidad, Presencia de Sentido y Propósito en la Vida. Asimismo, en los solicitantes de asilo, la personalidad contribuyó a la predicción de algunos estatus de identidad y de algunas variables sobre el sentido y propósito en la vida. Concluimos que cuando se diseñan programas eficaces de integración, los psicólogos deben considerar la personalidad para así poder empoderar a los solicitantes de asilo con la finalidad de lograr una identidad más saludable, y hallar nuevos sentidos y propósitos en la nueva sociedad de acogida.

Palabras Clave: Solicitante de asilo, Personalidad, Estatus de Identidad del Ego, Sentido de la Vida, Propósito en la Vida.

Resum

La majoria de sol·licitants d'asil han experimentat reptes d'identitat en el seu periple envers una vida més digna. La literatura mostra que aquells que millor superen les dificultats i troben el seu lloc en la societat d'acollida son aquells que s'identifiquen millor a sí mateixos i troben nous sentits i propòsits. Aquest estudi fou dissenyat per a investigar la relació entre Personalitat, Estatus d'Identitat de l'Ego, i Sentit i Propòsit a la Vida. La mostra consistí en dos grups diferents, però amb la mateixa llengua, cultura i religió: un vivia a l'Iran (n = 192, M = 29,10 anys) i l'altre a Berlín (n = 169, M = 29,02 anys) com a sol·licitant d'asil. Vàrem administrar el NEO-FFI, la Mesura Objectiva dels Estatus d'Identitat de l'Ego (EOM-EIS-2), i els qüestionaris Sentit (MLQ) i Propòsit a la Vida (PIL). Els resultats mostraren que ambdós grups no es diferenciaven significativament en els seus perfils de personalitat, però sí en Difusió de la Identitat, Presencia de Sentit i Propòsit a la vida. Així mateix, en els sol·licitants d'asil, la personalitat contribuí a la predicció d'alguns estatus d'identitat i d'algunes variables sobre el sentit i propòsit a la vida. Concloem que quan es dissenyen programes d'integració, si volem millorar la seva eficàcia, els psicòlegs han de considerar la personalitat per així poder empoderar als sol·licitants d'asil amb la finalitat d'aconseguir una identitat més saludable, i trobar nous sentits i propòsits en la nova societat d'acollida.

Paraules Clau: Sol·licitant d'asil, Personalitat, Estatus d'Identitat de l'Ego, Sentit de la Vida, Propòsit a la Vida.

Relationship between Personality Factors, Identity Statuses, Meaning and Purpose in

Life in Asylum Seekers

This research is designed and planned based on my experiences as a psychologist working with asylum seekers mostly from Afghanistan who are living in Berlin. During our daily contact with these people, we have often observed that, in many cases, although they are very interested to be an active part of the society, they seem not to be very motivated to attend different programs planned with the goal of supporting them in their integration process. These plans usually include different aspects from the psychosocial interventions to language learning and educational and career counselling and courses. These activities could be carried out in the asylum shelters or in cultural, educational or counselling centres.

Even when most of their basic needs (food, clothing, medical care, etc.) are met, many of them report that they do not feel happy and satisfied even though they do not have the same problems they had in the country of origin. In several cases they were asking us, why do we not feel happy although we do not have any life-threatening or even financial problems anymore. They have often declared that they do not really know how to come along with the obligations like learning a new language or they do not know who they are or what the purpose of their life is.

Both in research history and in the practical fields, we see that both researchers and professionals working with asylum seekers and refugees, are very much concentrated on the psychological difficulties originated from traumas and devastating experiences in the country of origin or on the way to the host country, or the present challenges in the host countries, like discriminations, different legal barriers, and difficulties, lack of language, etc. Although all mentioned problems could be potential reasons for not feeling fine and motivated for personal development, we have often heard asylum seekers complaining about bad feelings about themselves, their environment and that their life is installed in the depth of their internal world and goes beyond the everyday tasks and experiences. From our perspective,

what could explain best all different expressions, worries and complaints of these people is lack of meaning or a kind of emptiness or vacuum of meaning that they suffer from.

We assume that this lack of meaning is coming from an abrupt and unplanned migration to another country and that as a consequence, these people do not have the sources of meaning that they had in their own country anymore. Sources like the responsibilities as a father to cover the financial needs of the family, for men which is at least in the beginning of his stay is not there anymore as the financial needs are covered by social aid systems. Responsibilities like taking care about older people in the family like parents, that is not there anymore as these people are not with them anymore. On the other hand, we could also observe people struggling with different challenges to their identity and that sometimes they have to redefine or reconstruct their identity based on the new possibilities, demands and rules in the new society. Moreover, we have also paid attention to the possible connections between people's success in identity construction and finding meaning and purpose for their life and also connections between people's personality and their level of success in these areas. We have observed that some asylum seekers recovered better than the others and it was plausible that their personality traits could have a role in this process. We assume that as long as people did not overcome the challenges for their identity and the meaning and purpose they have in the life, all other interventions and plans for their integration might not have any success. We assume that every individual, especially asylum seekers, who more likely experience a crisis, should first know who he is and who he wants to be before finding meaning and purposes for his life, rather than being obliged to fulfil some predefined goals and plans according to the needs of the new society and integration programs. At the same time, the success of professional interventions is very tied to a good knowledge to the individual's personality rather than general assumptions and approaches based on the traumas and difficulties of asylum seekers as a certain layer of society. This means, that although an asylum seeker is an individual who needs to have meaning and purposes in his life to be

mentally happy and satisfied, he also should rather know who he is and who he wants to be. Moreover, if we want to support them in answering their questions, we should first know their personality's strength and weak points to provide them with better ideas, counselling, and solutions.

Our assumption is that, parallel to the other needed interventions such as social, educational, legal, etc., the assisting professionals should focus and empower them to build or rebuild their identity and find meaning in their life, otherwise, the rest of interventions might fail trough what we could call "being lost in transition".

To prove our hypotheses, we designed this research which is the objective of our PhD dissertation. Our main focus was to study a group of Persian speaking asylum seekers from asylum shelters and supporting centres in Berlin (Germany). Therefore, in order to have a better understanding about the identity construction and meaning search process that asylum seekers are undertaking and hoping that future interventions could be better planned considering these specific needs and development processes of asylum seekers, we assessed Identity status, the level of Meaning in life, Purpose in Life and Personality factors, and the relationship between these variables. We believe our research adds a new approach to the field of psychological intervention for asylum seekers.

In order to know who exactly the people we are studying and talking about are, we should first know who asylum seekers are according to the laws and which are the other similar definitions and the differences between them. At the same time, we mention the challenges that asylum seekers face in the country of origin, on the way and in the host country. We also examine the challenges that professionals working with asylum seekers face in order to illustrate the necessity of our research in this field.

Asylum Seekers

Asylum Seekers and Refugees: The Considerable Similarities and Differences

In English, the term "refugee" originates from the Old French word "refuge", meaning "hiding place". Later sometime between 1914-1916, it slightly changed to mean "one fleeing home" and referred to citizens of Flanders fleeing to west to avoid fighting in World War I (US Immigration, 2021).

After the World War II, the United Nations Refugee Convention (1951) defined "refugee" as any person "who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it" (United Nations Refugee Convention, Article 1.A.2, 1951). According to the last declaration from the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), refugees are the people "who are outside their country of nationality or habitual residence and unable to return there owing to serious and indiscriminate threats to life, physical integrity or freedom resulting from generalized violence or events seriously disturbing public order" (UNHCR, 2020, p. 19).

The word refugee is so often used to refer to the people who are actually asylum seekers but in fact, there is a slight but very important difference between the words refugee and asylum seeker. Based on the definition, "an individual who is seeking international protection" in countries with individualized procedures, an asylum-seeker is "someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which the claim is submitted." Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee was initially an asylum-seeker" (Amnesty International, 2019). This means that in practice, many of those who are refugees based on the definition, are not at the end able to get the status of a

refugee and take the advantages of being a refugee in the country of destination. Some of these asylum applications are even rejected more than once (Frankfurter Allgemeine, 2018; Heller-Beschnitt & Hungbaur, 2021; Hummel, 2017). At the same time, since many applications remain undecided for a long time (Amnesty International, 2019), and they might never be acknowledged as refugees (Martinez & Marquez, 2014), it is very crucial that professional and social workers working with these groups of people be fully aware of the legal differences between the status of asylum seekers and refugees because, in almost all countries, people receive different kinds of social welfare support (Nash & Umugwaneza, 2015), depending on their legal status and in many cases they have very different limitations (like having or not having a work permit).

For the mentioned differences and reasons, it is also very essential to know the difference between the asylum seekers and refugees, their possibilities and limitations when studying them, in order to understand their situation to provide necessary and accurate information to the society and different communities, and to set the right goals and devise feasible plans to support them.

Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Similarities and differences

Another term that might sometimes be used to refer to asylum seekers and refugees but has a very different meaning from a legal perspective is the word migrant. Although all refugees and asylum seekers have in a way migrated to another country, we should pay attention to the differences in an official context. From the perspective of the country of arrival, a migrant is a person "who moves into a country other than that of his or her nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence" (adapted from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1, 1998, p. 10).

Another definition from the Migration Policy Institute that completes the previous one says that "an immigrant is a person living in a country other than that of his or her birth. No matter if that person has taken the citizenship of the destination country, served in its military, married a native, or has another status, he or she will forever be an international migrant" (Bolter, 2019, p. 1).

Considering the mentioned definitions, we can see where the main differences between immigrants and refugees and asylum seekers are coming from. It is important to pay attention that an immigrant but not a refugee is someone who moves in a planned way (Nash & Umugwaneza, 2015). This immigration can be through a student admission, a job, a financial investment, etc. This means that unless in exceptional situations, the person had enough time to prepare for his/her journey to the country of destination. This preparation could include long term planning like learning the language, organizing financial documents to short term planning like packing the suitcases and booking tickets and hotels, etc. However, these are not the processes that most asylum seekers go through, for a variety of reasons including safety (Martinez & Marquez, 2014).

At the same time, immigrants know that if they wish to return to their country of origin, they are free to decide (Nash & Umugwaneza, 2015), although they might face some economic or other challenges. They have their family and friends there, and they have the freedom to travel back home and interact with them. This freedom of choice provides them with opportunities that asylum seekers and refugees do not have. A clear example that can also clarify the different psychological conditions in which refugees and asylum seekers live in the host country, compared to immigrants is that, if an immigrant receives bad news concerning a beloved one's serious health problem in the home country, he is free to decide to go and visit the loved one; but this is not possible for asylum seekers as they cannot travel as long as they are not acknowledged as refugees, and even after this acknowledgment, in most cases they cannot travel back to their home country legally (Martinez & Marquez,

2014). Similar emotional situations as mentioned above can create a lot of psychological tensions for these groups of people.

There are some other differences that initiate from different laws in different countries for refugees and asylum seekers. For example, immigrants do not have the same challenges as refugees do: traumas and difficulties on the way to Europe (Martinez & Marquez, 2014), lengthy waits to fulfil their basic needs like food and shelter (Catholic Agency for Oversees Development, 2019; Monath, 2015), limitations in traveling or choosing the city they want to live in, even in their options for studying or working (Gower, 2021; De Cock et al., 2019).

For all of these reasons and several more, it is essential to know all different legal statuses and different challenges that people may experience in the country of destination (Nash & Umugwaneza, 2015).

Refugee Crisis

The phenomenon of leaving home temporarily or permanently by a specific population or group of people for safety and security reasons, has such a long history that one of the oldest documented cases is assumed to be the biblical account of Israelites fleeing from Assyrian conquest (circa 740 BCE) to ancient Persia (Brook, 2018). The last mass immigration from Europe and throughout Europe happened in the midst of World War II, after which this phenomenon got the official attention of many different social and international organizations and above all United Nations (UNHCR, 2011).

It seems that the phenomenon of fleeing of a big population from one place to another, not only is not less challenging than the past but even more challenging, despite having such a long history (Hanewinkel & Oltmer, 2017; International Rescue Committee, 2020). The UNHCR estimates that at least 10 million people were stateless across the globe at the end of 2015. However, data recorded by governments and communicated to UNHCR were limited to 3.7 million stateless individuals in 78 countries. Global forced displacement

increased in 2015, with record-high numbers. By the end of the year, 65.3 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. This was 5.8 million more than the year before (59.5 million). While the rate of increase slowed particularly compared with the sharp rises of the previous couple of years, the current number of displaced globally is nonetheless the highest since the aftermath of World War II. Since 2011, when UNHCR announced a new record of 42.5 million forcibly displaced people across the world, these numbers rose sharply each year, from 45.2 million in 2012 to 51.2 million in 2013 and 59.5 million in 2014. This is an increase of more than 50 % in five years (data obtained from UN Refugee Agency, 2015).

Considering the statistics related to these large-scale forced displacements and the way it is perceived and named in Europe ("refugee crisis"), the situation of recent years has set Europeans worrying not only about the destiny of millions of asylum seekers, but also the future of their Union.

Germany as a host country

According to the UN Refugee Agency (2015), during the year 2015, with 441,900 asylum claims, Germany was the world's largest recipient of new individual applications, followed by the United States of America (172,700), Sweden (156,400), and the Russian Federation (152,500).

In Germany, the country on which our research is based on, the year 2015 was characterized by the highest level of immigration of individuals seeking protection. In 2014, 202,834 asylum applications were submitted, while in 2015, 476,649 asylum applications (including first and subsequent asylum applications) were registered. This amounts to an increase of 135% compared to the preceding year according to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (2016). Never before in the history of the Federal Republic of

Germany were the numbers of incoming asylum seekers higher than those reported (Hanewinkel & Oltmer, 2017).

Based on different reports, the year 2015 entered the collective memory of Germany's population as the year of the "refugee crisis". Although not for all, but for many people the first urgent question is how to alleviate the sorrow of the millions displaced people from their homes as a result of horrific civil war as the ones in Afghanistan and Syria (Martinez, 2015). Consequently, since this time, the central issue, not only in the field of migration, integration and asylum, but also in many other areas of management, was how to organize and manage the resources for the newly arrived asylum seekers. According to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (2016), which has been the official authority that deals with migration events in Germany, and has provided a comprehensive overview of developments in immigration and emigration on an annual basis since 2005, the debates on the above-mentioned topics usually focused on the following themes: Supporting systems and social aid for asylum seekers, racist and violent behaviours against asylum seekers, policies for the border controls, different asylum rules for asylum seekers depending on the country of origin, and integration programs for asylum seekers. The first and the last of these themes are very much connected to the aims and the objectives of our study, and we will refer to them later.

Depending on the past history, potentials and economic status of the host society and the welfare system that already exists (Martin et al., 2016) the arrival of asylum seekers has more or less consequences for the host society. Depending on the perspective of the locals, refugees/asylum seekers and their presence in different societies evoke very different feelings and emotions among different types of locals. In Germany, the reactions among people towards having asylum seekers ranged from showing extreme sympathy, very active acceptance and welcoming support (International Rescue Committee, 2020) to showing extreme anger/hate, and harmful denial of those seeking protection (Emamzadeh & Hagan, 2020; Landmann et al., 2019; Verkuyten, 2004). Emphatic behaviours of the people varied

from voluntary work, providing asylum seekers with what they needed, energy and financial resources to honest actions and dedications in the official working positions (International Rescue Committee, 2020). On other hand, aggressive actions varied from minor racist and discriminating behaviours to extremely violent crimes (Emamzadeh & Hagan, 2020; Landmann et al., 2019; Verkuyten, 2004). According to available analyses, a burning attack against a refugee camp was reported once every three days (Hanewinkel & Oltmer, 2017).

We should consider that these extreme criminal actions create fears and insecurity, not only for the refugees/asylum seekers but also for other members of host society, including locals and other immigrants (Müller & Schwarz, 2021; TAZ, 2021). This is how the psychological balance of the society changes, and it is normally followed by balance changes in other areas.

Following the above-mentioned situation in the host society, we focus more deeply on the challenges that asylum seekers face in their original country, on the way to Europe and also in the host country.

Physical and Psychological Challenges Asylum Seekers Face in their Original Country, on the Way and in the Host Country

Asylum seekers are the people who decide to flee due to the difficulties and problems they face in the country they live. These difficulties can be life threatening in most cases like the war situations. However, leaving the country and starting the journey, especially when it is an illegal way, might mean that they face other expected or unexpected problems on the way, and sometimes these problems are also devastating or life threatening.

On the other hand, when they arrive in the host country, they face a new series of challenges depending on the time and the country they arrive in. In general, the challenges refugees experience in the host country can be divided into two categories: The physical/material and the psychological/mental.

Physical and Material Challenges

There is a huge difference between the situation of asylum seekers from one country to another. At the same time, their situation is also dependent on if they arrive in large groups, in a time of crisis or not. We try to refer to the general problems but also concentrate on the experiences of asylum seekers in Europe, especially in Germany as our research is based on asylum seekers living in Germany.

The first and probably the main complication that creates a lot of worry on the way to a new country originates from the fact that most asylum seekers take illegal ways to reach the host country. Sometimes, they encounter situations that can put their life at risk due to the means they use to migrate. Travelling illegally usually means traveling through very difficult ways, high numbers in very insecure boats, walking through mountains, deserts or jungles for many days and hours (Martinez, 2015). The arrival of refugees to European borders frequently leads to tragedies that can be directly associated to human smuggling. There have been many reports on such devastating incidents that asylum seekers go through. In October 2013, more than 300 people drowned off the coast of Lampedusa. In the same month, 92 people died crossing the Sahara Desert near the Libyan border. In August 2015, 70 people suffocated in the back of a truck in Austria (Blundell-Wignall & Moulette, 2015) and many other horrific stories on the way to Europe are reported every year (Hilton, 2016; Womack, 2018).

Another main problem that creates a lot of long-term worries and complications for asylum seekers is facing closed borders and doors on their way to Europe. After 2016, many refugees have faced closed doors on the borders in Europe (Tamás, 2015). A large number of asylum seekers have been left stranded in Greece, since many of the European borders were closed, in some cases for years, without any perspective about the future (Amnesty International, 2021; Steele, 2018). On the Greek island of Lesvos, about 8,000 refugees are

living in Camp Moria, which is about the size of a super Walmart (Steele, 2018). New arrivals of Afghans will not even be able to enter Greece (Infobae, 2021). This situation makes life even more difficult for people from Afghanistan, after summer 2021 that Taliban took control over Afghanistan again.

One more reason that makes asylum seekers suffer a lot on the way is that they are not prepared for their journey. They normally take minimum belongings along, or they lose their belongings on the way. This means that they might suffer a lot from the things that, might not be troublesome on a normal long journey and just need more equipment. The extreme cold on the way, getting wet in the water, urgent need for first aid box and basic medicines are some examples of the conditions that most asylum seekers are not prepared for (Catholic Agency for Oversees Development, 2019).

Finally, lengthy waits of the people on the arrival for receiving required facilities, is also a source of stress that many asylum seekers experience, especially those who have children and elderly people with them. Depending on the country, the time that one needs to wait before receiving accommodation, food and cleaning/hygiene equipment is very different. In Germany, in the time of crisis, in 2015, there were very long lines of people waiting for hours and days in the streets before they could register at the right office, get shelter, food and proper clothes (During & Hulverscheidt, 2015). At the same time, and after this step, it took them a long time, sometimes more than some year, to be transferred from very basic shelters (sport halls) to more private accommodations. Moreover, the hygiene level in their rooms, and having hygienic and accessible bathrooms have been some of the long-lasting problems for the asylum seekers who arrived after 2015 (Seyffarth, 2016).

Psychological and Mental Challenges

The main sources of suffering for asylum seekers are traumas (e.g., previous traumas in their homeland, acquired traumas during fleeing), and fears (e.g., to be sent back to the

home country, to lose members of the family, to lose social support from their friends, etc. not only in their homeland but also in the new land).

The traumas that asylum seekers experience in homeland, and the disasters connected to wars, persecutions and human rights violations, is something that almost everybody has heard at least once on the media. However, unfortunately the reality is most of the time more horrific than what is reported (Robila, 2018). Research indicates that asylum seekers could be about ten times more likely to have post-traumatic stress disorder than age-matched general populations in the host countries (Fazel et al., 2005). It is often happening that people want to leave the place where they do not have a sense of belonging for safety, security, social or political reasons in a search for a place where they can feel at home. However, it can also be very stressful to leave behind all people you are attached to and everything you and your ancestors have built through decades, and finally the place which is supposed to be your home. The process of taking all these decisions can impact the mental health in a very negative way (Aarethun et al., 2021; Dietrich et al., 2019; Jongedijk et al., 2020; Nesterko et al., 2019; Robila, 2018).

Asylum seekers are exposed to traumatic and stressful experiences, not only at their home country but also on the way to the country of destination (Blundell-Wignall & Moulette, 2015). That is why, in comparison to the other layers of a certain society, asylum seekers are at higher risk for developing mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Fazel et al., 2005). Several studies show that these psychological disorders and symptoms are correlated with major physical diseases including cardiovascular and inflammatory ones (Hollifield et al., 2013). However, there are many factors that could influence the mental health of asylum seekers in negative or positive ways including the previous mental health of the person in the home country, social network, family supports, civic cares (Fazel et al., 2005; Frounfelker et al., 2020; Robila, 2018) and also early psychosocial support (Nesterko et al., 2019).

Fears for being sent back to the home country is another challenging and sometimes traumatizing source of anxiety for some asylum seekers. These fears are sometimes so devastating that not only do they make it difficult to plan and work for their future, but they also lead to suicide in many cases (Frankfurter Allgemeine, 2018; Heller-Beschnitt & Hungbaur, 2021).

Being separated from core family members, waiting a long time with uncertainty for family reunion (Aslam, 2018) and not having the same family and social network and support that refugees and asylum seekers had in their home country, are other sources of psychological challenge that are sometimes very destructive. Such difficulties, in the form of traumas and fears not only affect them on a psychological level, but also in different other ways, including barriers to their personal growth and development (International Rescue Committee, 2020).

Another main source of suffering for asylum seekers is the challenging and disappointing conditions and situations that asylum seekers experience in the host country. In addition to the psychological stress and tension that originates from lack of privacy, not having a calm and peaceful corner to rest or not having basic levels of hygiene in the accommodation does neither help.

Some other sources of stress and disappointment are racist behaviours and discriminations towards asylum seekers in many host countries. Apart from the personal reports and complaints from asylum seekers and refugees, there are several studies that report the racist and discriminative behaviours and actions towards refugees and migrants, and the negative consequences (Benner et al., 2018; Hanewinkel & Oltmer, 2017; Statistics Netherlands, 2018; Voynova et al., 2017; Ward et al., 2021). Literature indicates that the mental health of asylum seekers and refugees are very much affected by the way the host society reacts to them. The findings of a study conducted by Haase et al. (2019) revealed that

more perceived discrimination in the host country resulted in an increase in reported psychological problems affecting the mental health of refugees.

Discriminations between different groups of asylum seekers can be even more destructive than the discriminations between asylum seekers and natives, as it creates both tensions between these groups and barriers for their solidarity. Accurate analysis provides evidences for separating asylum seekers based on different regulations. Moreover, the extent to which asylum seekers are affected by discrimination in different ways depends on their origin and their social situation (Pichl, 2017; Scherr, 2015) and creates obstacles on the way of integration (Feinstein et al., 2022)

Being blamed for the problems which already exist in the society is another good point to mention while talking about discrimination towards asylum seekers and refugees. In a study conducted in Germany, findings showed that natives with negative associations towards Arabic names were more likely ascribing responsibility of received shocks to refugees compared to the natives with positive associations (Grimm & Klimm, 2019).

Finally, another source of challenge for asylum seekers are the barriers they have to face when they want to build a career in the host country. Based on the laws of the country of destination, asylum seekers and refugees might be much more limited in their possibilities for studying or working compared to the majority of the society including migrants (Gower, 2021; De Cock et al., 2019). Integration of those who can enter the labour markets in Europe is a challenge that cannot be ignored anymore (Martin et al., 2016). The experts interviewed by the researchers emphasized that the refugees are in general highly motivated to find a job. This appraisal of refugees' motivation is confirmed by a survey conducted by the Institute of Employement Research, the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees and the Socio-Economic Panel at the German Institute for Economic Research (Kroh et. al., 2016) in which from June to December 2016, more than 4,500 refugees had been questioned. The results of this survey indicated that 78% of unemployed refugees answered "definitely" when they were

asked whether they were planning to work in the future; another 15% answered "probably". However, there are a lot of barriers on the way of finding a job and building a career especially for asylum seekers including the necessity of knowing the native language to a certain level, having official certificate for what they professionally know or passing the necessary exams to acknowledge the professions in the host country are some of the problems that make it to seem very unrealistic for some refugees to find a real tax paid job (Winters, 2018).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Other Psychological Dysfunctions as a consequence

Based on the available literature, it is approximately ten times more likely to find a person with post-traumatic stress disorder among refugees compared to other age-matched residents in those countries (Fazel et al., 2005). Recently, Dietrich et al. (2019) in a study with young men from Syria and Iraq found that 59.4% of the participants reported at least one traumatic experience. The Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) rate in this sample was in the average range compared to previous estimates from large samples of refugees. The results indicated that the traumatic experiences are specifically assumed to create a major barrier on the integration of refugees in the host country and that they generate psychiatric vulnerability. The authors concluded that integration programs should consider to include supportive structures in their plans.

In another research conducted by Nesterko et al. (2019), the authors investigated PTSD, depression and somatisation in a sample of refugees from Cameroon, Eritrea, Syria, Iraq, Nigeria, and Turkey who have recently arrived in Germany from different countries. Based on the results, 49.7% of the respondents screened positive for at least one of the mental disorders investigated, with 34.9% suffering from PTSD, 21.7% from depression, and 31% from somatisation. Prevalence rates of major depression, other depressive syndromes and PTSD were calculated according to the DSM-5, which indicated rates of 10.3%, 17.6% and

28.2%, respectively. They emphasize on considering dramatic mental health burden present among refugees and provide important information for health care planning.

More recently, Aerethun et al. (2021) examined how Syrian refugees in Norway, describe and refer to seek help for symptoms of PTSD and depression. The findings illustrate that in spite of not really mentioning PTSD, participants in the interviews recognized the symptoms. They perceived them as a common reaction to life-threatening conditions they faced, mostly the war, the journey, and post-migratory stressors. Depression was considered as either depression or feelings caused by social problems, and the participants were mostly uncertain to recognize these symptoms. The main finding is how participants described changing stressors resulting from migration and resettlement leading to a difference in how they would seek help in Syria and in Norway. The authors have concluded that preferred help-seeking and coping strategies were contextual.

Finally, in an investigation by Schlechter et al. (2021), on two samples of German residents and refugees, the findings indicated on higher levels of psychological distress, more exposure to potentially traumatic events, less social support, less resilience, and more perceived support from their faith in the group of refugees compared to the group of German population. Outcomes also showed that lower levels of social support and flexibility moderately described the group differences in higher psychological distress in refugees. The researchers emphasize on the importance of social support and individual resilience in explaining mental health inconsistencies between refugees and residents. This, in turn, may inform future intervention studies to reduce raised up levels of psychological suffering experienced by refugees.

Reviewing different studies including those mentioned above, we can have a better insight on psychological distress that asylum seekers and refugees show in the form of PTSD, depression and somatization. At the same time, it is also very important to pay attention to the

higher rates of PTSD and depression among asylum seekers compared to refugees (Robila, 2018) due to the higher level of challenges they experience, as mentioned earlier.

These psychological challenges at the same time obstruct expected incorporation to the host society and these expectations themselves sometimes act as a source of tension and stress. Consequently, host countries have to respond not only to the political and social needs of the asylum seekers but also consider their psychological needs and provide professional psychological support in order to alleviate their suffering, increase personal resilience as well as empowering them to start a productive life. A realistically and professionally planned supporting system will also serve the host society by increasing the level of psychological health of asylum seekers who are part of the society, and at the same time, by facilitating the process of their integration into the society in a fruitful way.

Challenges for the professionals working with Asylum Seekers

Professionals working with refugees have to face different demanding conditions which might be very challenging to deal with. According to outcomes of a study by Binder et al. (2020), the psychological impact of social work with refugees appear to be very high compared to working with other groups of the society. The effect of distressing factors such as not knowing the asylum seekers' language that makes them work with translators and the daily psychological burden of exposure to traumatic contents or PTSD symptoms need to be reduced in these professionals by offering specific continuing education and supervision. The individual differences in the psychological influences among professionals should be acknowledged and assessed on a regular basis as secondary prevention. Helpful factors like self-care, teamwork, networking and cooperation are evident and should be supported by implementing professional and psychological support to them (Binder et al., 2020). Another study by Rizkalla and Segal (2020) investigated the relationship between work stressors and organizational support with vicarious post-traumatic growth among aid-workers of

organizations in Jordan. Based on the findings, higher levels of vicarious traumatization were linked to higher levels of vicarious post-traumatic growth, lower levels of intimacy and lower differentiation. Moreover, the researchers concluded that the organizational support is vital in modifying the negative impacts of trauma-work, and in empowering an encouraging space for potential development in the health level of aid-workers. In another study, Asfaw et al. (2020) designed a qualitative study with the aim of investigating major challenges encountered by psychotherapists in cross-cultural psychotherapy and approaches which have been overcoming such challenges. They administrated semi-structured in-depth interviews to 10 purposely selected psychotherapists working with refugees in Germany. Respondents were from varying theoretical backgrounds and had varying levels of experience. They reported three main challenges in their cross-cultural practice: a) different or unrealistic expectations of clients towards what psychotherapy would offer them, b) challenges grounded in different illness explanatory models, and c) language communication challenges.

One main reason that working with asylum seekers might be very challenging is that social workers also need to be culturally knowledgeable, and have the specific and essential knowledge and skills to work appropriately with their clients from asylum seekers and refugees. Results from two postal surveys in New Zealand found that practitioners need to be informed regarding "service delivery systems" and to be well-informed concerning critical areas such as somatic and psychological health, family function, cultural differences, language, education, and financial conditions (Nash & Umugwaneza, 2015). At the same time, although most professionals know about the high burden of mental health complications among refugees and asylum seekers, there are inadequate scientific sources and literature about effective mental health care provision for this group of people.

Another main challenge for the social work in recent years which has not gained much attention in the literature is that it is very much influenced and challenged by the political changes and regulations in each country. Apart from the general challenges, social

work with forced migrants has taken different arrangements and responsibilities over time, parallel to the changes in the legal rights and limitations for refugees and asylum seekers after the Second World War until today. Inside Europe, specifically after the so-called refugee crisis, social work with displaced populations has been the subject of increasing complication: their ambiguous legal status (Martinez & Marquez, 2014), the discriminations that the political and social system shows towards them (Pichl, 2017) and the created conflicts among them have all major consequences for not only social work practice, but also research and study about refugees and asylum seekers (Boccagni & Righard, 2020). The best examples are the cases of asylum seekers who are very well improving in their mental health, social life and personal development after a lot of time and energy invested by social workers, but then suddenly they receive the paper of the rejection for their asylum which means they have to go back to the country of origin or in the best case (depending on the laws of the state), they cannot continue their studies, as they have to find a simple job or traineeship which makes them financially independent from the state and helps them stay in the country (Heller-Beschnitt & Hungbaur, 2021). Consequently, as the legal rights change along the time and might not apply to all the asylum seekers as it depends on the country which they are coming from, professionals are required to stay informed regularly not only in their own discipline, but also on the laws and regulations about asylum application and rights.

Asylum seekers' lack of knowledge about the social system of the host country, adds to the challenges mentioned above. They often have limited information or even wrong imaginations towards how the social and welfare services function (Boccagnia & Righard, 2020). Unfortunately, many of them have come to Europe based on wrong information and deceptions from smugglers, wrong information on what they get on their arrival and later, wrong news about family reunion, among others (Blundell-Wignall & Moulette, 2015).

On the other hand, along with all the challenges reviewed above that generate a lot of exhaustion for professionals, another main challenge that causes many social workers feel

frustrated or complain is that a considerable number of refugees are not motivated to plan and work for any educational or professional goal, or they leave or change the plans and programs incomplete (Peterson, 2021; Refugeeum, 2016).

To sum up, it is necessary to point out again that all the challenges discussed in this section can give us an overall picture about the challenges that asylum seekers and professionals working with them face. Asylum seekers suffer from psychological distresses, and professional workers need a clear and comprehensive approach to provide them with a successful mental health support and to empower them to actualize their potential capacity, abilities and talents. What we assume based on our direct experiences with asylum seekers, is that we need deeper insight on their identity development and to better understand how it is connected to the meaning they find in their life and the purposes they have, before any planning or adopting any approach in empowering and motivating them.

Challenges for the Identity

One of the main challenges that asylum seekers have to overcome in the psychological level is to cope with the effects of leaving behind the place supposed to be "home" and those who assumed to be family and friends.

Another challenge that sometimes can be very damaging is to answer to the very basic and ongoing questions of "Who am I?" and "Who do I want to be?" after leaving their country, family, job, daily responsibilities and involvements in the home country. Identity crisis is a challenge experienced by many newly or formerly arrived asylum seekers and refugees (Bulgin, 2018; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000; Wehrle et al., 2018). Within recent years, many researchers have been studying this subject and trying to find out which obstacles asylum seekers and refugees find on their way to answer these questions in order to build or rebuild their identity.

Although identity crisis experienced by asylum seekers is perhaps not the first difficulty that comes to mind while considering all the challenges that asylum seekers have to face day by day (Bulgin, 2018), the consequences of using healthy or unhealthy approaches to overcome this psychological phase can influence the person's life in a very productive or destructive way and in different dimensions, as the identity itself has several dimensions (Bulgin, 2018; Burnett, 2013; Wehrle et al., 2018). At the same time, like most other psychological challenges, the challenge for identity is felt more when the basic physical needs like safe accommodations have been met. Perhaps the more stable and routine the person feels in the new place, the more time and freedom of mind they have to focus on his upcoming challenges regarding who he supposes himself to be.

Challenges for the Meaning and Purpose in life

Not having clear purposes and meanings in life or not having any motivation for planning and working based on purposes and meanings, are other common challenges experienced by asylum seekers and professionals working with them.

We know that emotional numbing, lack of motivation (or lack of interest in previously-enjoyable activities, including working and studying), lack of meaning (or inner emptiness), negative thoughts, extreme levels of fatigue and exhaustion, inactivity, escaping different activities or places in the fear of activating memories of the traumatic events, social separation and withdrawal behaviours, shyness, inability to concentrate, are some of the frequently described symptoms of post-traumatic stress that are also very common among asylum seekers and refugees (Cascade Behavioral Health Hospital, 2019; Covenant Counseling, 2021; Refugeeum, 2016; Tull & Block, 2020). We also know that many post-traumatic survivors internalize that they are "lazy" when it is not a lack of motivation that keeps them away from setting and following goals, but the trauma itself (Peterson, 2021). Withdrawing from different activities might be a normal reaction for a certain time. It can

help the person to process what she/he has experienced. However, if feelings of lack of meaning or emptiness last for a long period of time, it is important to ask for support in different ways in order to start taking an active part in life again (Refugeeum, 2016).

On the other hand, we assume that regardless of experiencing or not experiencing traumas, lack of meanings or purposes in life could come from that many asylum seekers no longer have the same responsibilities and sources of meaning that they had in their home country.

In order to have a better understanding of the identity development in asylum seekers, and of how it is connected to the meaning and purpose in life, and as a result to their motivation, it is also important to know more about how these constructions are challenged by asylum seekers when they find themselves in a new country with a new language, culture and circumstances. Moreover, we assume that the primary features that we should study in asylum seekers to reach a better understanding of their identity, the meaning and the purpose they have in life, are their personality traits.

In the next two sections, we are going to have a literature overview of the concepts of Identity and Meaning in Life. From our understanding, these two concepts are crucial for empowering asylum seekers to build a life full of meaning and content based on their capacities and talents while considering the needs and demands of the host country. Afterwards, we will have a literature overview on personality, for we see personality as a foundation for studying identity, meaning and purpose in life.

Identity Status

In this section, we are going to describe the main theories about Identity that have been developed in the field of psychology, theories on which our research is based on and we are going to clarify why we chose them.

Identity

"To review the concept of identity means to sketch its history" (Erikson, 1968, p. 1). It seems like human being has been always interested and curious to find answers to such questions as: "Who am I?" and "Who do I want to be?" and the history of identity research can be found in the ancient world (De Levita et al., 1976, as cited in Haller & Müller, 2008), from ancient philosophy to modern psychology. In the Gathas, Zoroaster (7th and 6th century BCE) considers the human beings mental status as struggling between aša (Truth) and druj (Lie) in three different aspects of thoughts, words and deeds (Boyce, 2001; Nietzsche et al., 2006). Therefore, the answer to the questions "Who am I? or who do I want my future self to be?" is directly and indirectly answered by the way a person overcomes the struggle to make a choice between truth and lie in his thoughts, words and deeds. The interest and conceptualization of identity have been brought up by the old and early modern philosophers (Haller & Müller, 2008) and expanded in psychology, beginning with William James's Theory of Self (Cooper, 1992) which says that the self is composed of "I" and "Me" (Babaj & Sruti Lall, 2018).

As Erikson (1968) mentioned in the beginning of his book "Identity: Youth and Crisis" in addition to the specific sense used in this book, the term Identity has been used and applied in a wide range of contexts for over twenty years, but it is time for a final definition. At the same time, within the last five decades, more and more academics in social science and humanities fields have paid a careful attention to the questions regarding "identity", so it is still applied in different contexts and senses. Also, in recent years, especially after the so-called refugee crisis everywhere, the concept of identity crisis among refugees has gained a lot of attention among scholars.

It seems that the simplest and most adequate answer to the question "What is identity?" is that: "It is how one answers to the question "who are you?" Or, "my identity is how I define who I am" (Fearon, 1999, p. 11). Usually when scientific writers present a clear

definition of what they mean by this word, this is often the way they do it "a person's identity is how the person defines who he or she is" (Fearon, 1999, p. 11). At the same time, identity includes the moral values people have in their life, which are supposed to be the representations of the decisions they would probably make in certain situations, but not necessarily. An identity might contain multiple roles—such as a father, an engineer, and a Turkish citizen —and each of them includes "meanings and expectations" that are assumed in one's identity.

Identity and the Theory of Psychosocial Development by Erick H. Erikson (1902-1994)

Erik H. Erikson, in his psychosocial theory of development (1950, as cited in Oyserman et al., 2012) describes identity as a coherent conception of the self that is made up of goals, values and beliefs, to which an individual is strongly committed (Babaj & Sruti Lall, 2018). While his theory was impacted by the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud and his works, Erikson's theory centered on psychosocial development rather than psychosexual development (Berck, 2017; Erikson, 1968).

According to Erikson, people progress through eight stages of psychosocial development as they grow from infancy to adulthood and change throughout life. During each stage, people face a developmental and psychological crisis that could have a positive or negative impact on personal growth depending on whether the conflict specific to that stage is successfully resolved or not. He was interested in how social interactions and relationships affect development and growth (Cherry & Susman, 2021; McLeod, 2017). For Erikson (1968), these crises have a psychosocial nature because they are triggered by psychological needs of the individual who is also challenged by the needs of his society (Berk, 2017; Erikson, 1968; McLeod, 2017).

The stages that make up his theory are as follows (Berck, 2017; Vogel-Scibilia et al., 2009): Stage 1: Trust vs. Mistrust; Stage 2: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt; Stage 3:

Initiative vs. Guilt; Stage 4: Industry vs. Inferiority; Stage 5: Identity vs. Confusion; Stage 6: Intimacy vs. Isolation; Stage 7: Generativity vs. Stagnation; Stage 8: Integrity vs. Despair.

Every stage in Erikson's theory is built on the previous stages and prepares the person for following eras of development. According to Erikson, people experience a conflict in each stage, that is in fact a critical turning point in one's development (Berck, 2017; Malone et al., 2016). If individuals successfully develop through one stage and fruitfully overcomes the specific conflict of that stage, they gain psychological power that will support their development through the next stages and their whole lifetime (Orenstein & Lewis, 2021; Scheck, 2014). At the same time, not being successful in a healthy development through one stage could lead to lack of some essential skills to pass through other stages in a healthy way. However, these stages can be resolved successfully at a later time (Erikson, 1968; McLeod, 2017; Scheck, 2014).

Stage 5: Identity vs. Confusion

Among the eight stages in Erikson's theory, we are going to focus on Stage 5. Based on the intense practical experiences with asylum seekers and also on the published literature (Bulgin, 2018; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000; Wehrle et al., 2018), we found some similarities between what adolescents experience in this stage and what asylum seekers face as an identity crisis within the first years after their arrival, as explained in the previous section. This stage starts during puberty between the ages of nearly 12 and 18 years. In this period of time, adolescents explore their independence and develop a sense of self (Berk, 2017; Erikson, 1968). They search for a sense of self and personal identity: success enhances the ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self. Therefore, during adolescence, children explore their independence and develop a sense of self (Malone et al., 2016). "This period can be viewed as a psychosocial moratorium during which the young adult may find a niche in some section of his society through free

role experimentation, a niche which is firmly defined and yet seems to be uniquely made" (Erikson, 1968, p. 156). We could say that the potential and ideal achievement of this stage could be a mature person with a healthy ego identity who knows his unique roles in the society, family and other areas of life. On the other hand, the failures in this stage can lead to an identity diffusion in which the individual has not yet found his place in the society, family and other areas of the life.

According to Erikson (1963) "ego identity and identity diffusion refer to polar outcomes of the hypothesized psychosocial crisis occurring in late adolescence. Erikson views this phase of the life cycle as a time of growing occupational and ideological commitment. Facing such imminent adult tasks as getting a job and becoming a citizen, the individual is required to synthesize childhood identifications in such a way that he can both establish a reciprocal relationship with his society and maintain a feeling of continuity within himself" (Marcia, 1966, p. 551). "I shall present human growth from the point of view of the Identity conflicts, inner and outer, which the vital personality weathers, re-emerging from each crisis with an increased sense of inner unity, with an increase of good judgment, and an increase in the capacity "to do well" according to his own standards and to the standards of those who are significant to him. The use of the words "to do well" of course points up the whole question of cultural relativity" (Erikson, 1968, p. 91). Although Erikson supposed that every stage of psychosocial development has a considerable value in one's personal growth, he emphasized particularly on the development of ego identity in the 5th stage (Berck, 2017; Vogel-Scibilia et al., 2009).

Since Identity Status is one of the main topics in our study, we are going to explain what ego identity and these statuses exactly mean and where these concepts are coming from.

The Concept of Ego Identity

Levesque (2011) considers Erikson's theory, the most influential one in this area and refers to Erikson's description of ego identity as "a means for continuity of the person" (p. 813). Erikson viewed ego identity as serving to protect individuals in the face of change produced by sudden changes of personal or situational factors. Having a strong sense of ego identity means having the ability to synthesize different "selves" into one coherent identity throughout time, and creating an inner coherence and sameness. The development of an effective sense of ego identity, then, is what laymen would equate with possessing a strong sense of self. To put in another words, "Ego Identity" is the sense of identity that equip individuals with the capability to be conscious about their sense of who they are, and at the same time act on that sense, in a way that has continuousness and uniformity (Levesque, 2011).

This ego identity or the conscious sense of self is the central focus during the identity versus confusion stage of psychosocial development of self, but our ego identity continuously changes due to new daily experiences and the knowledge we gain in our social exchanges with others. When we have new experiences, we are more willing to accept challenges that can support or challenge the development of identity (Berck, 2017; Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2014).

Identity in four Statuses by James Marcia (1937-Present)

While Erikson has assumed one's identity resolution to stand somewhere on a continuum between identity achievement and role confusion, Marcia (1966, 2002) defined four very different means by which one may approach identity defining decisions: Identity Achievement, Moratorium, Identity Foreclosure and Identity Diffusion. He developed and expanded Erikson's theory by indicating the extent to which one has accomplished in two

dimensions of exploration and commitment on the way to achieve a healthy identity in different areas of life.

From his perspective, the two main fields in which the person has to start commitments since his adolescence time, are ideology and occupation (Marcia, 1966, 2002). Erikson (1968) developed a widely used model of identity development that focused on the development of identity via exploration and commitment (Leary & Tangney, 2014). However, Marcia, categorized the outcomes of the contributions as whether or not (the extent to which/ low or high) one explores identity alternatives and whether or not (low or high) one makes a commitment to chosen alternatives, which results in four different Identity Statuses (Berk, 2017; Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2014).

The table below summarizes the fundamental differences between the four Identity Statuses.

		Level of Commitment	
		High	Low
Level of Exploration	High	Identity Achievement	Moratorium
	Low	Foreclosure	Identity Diffusion

Moreover, Marcia tried to asses ego identity using criteria and values that match with Erikson's construction of the identity crisis as a psychosocial task. The measures included a semi-structured interview and a sentence completion task. The interview was used to determine which of four points of Identity Status along a continuum of ego-identity achievement best represents the participant. The incomplete-sentences blank served as an overall measure of identity achievement. The four identity statuses consisted of two variables: level of exploration and level of commitment, which were applied to occupational choice, religion, and political ideology. Exploration and crisis could be the same stage referring to the period of engagement of the individual in choosing among meaningful

alternatives, and commitment refers to the degree of personal investment the individual exhibits. "Identity achievement" and "identity diffusion" are "polar alternatives of status inherent in Erikson's theory".

According to the criteria in his study (Marcia, 1966), the two assumed categories of identity are: a) Identity Achievement and b) Identity Diffusion. Identity achievement individuals have experienced an exploration phase in which they have consciously considered different occupational options and ideological choices, reevaluated past beliefs and finally they are committed to one or some of these options and achieved a determination that guide them to act freely. On the other hand, identity diffusion individuals might or might not have practiced an exploration phase. The characteristic that represents them most is a lack of commitment. About occupational options, either they have not yet decided upon a profession or they are not much concerned about it. Regarding ideology, they are neither interested nor do they approach consciously whether one viewpoint is good enough for them to be committed to.

Moreover, two additional categorizing points in this distribution are the following statuses: Moratorium and Foreclosure. The moratorium subjects are in the exploration period with a conscious commitment about what they want. They are distinguished from the identity diffusion subjects by the appearance of an active struggle to make commitments. Although they pay attention to the desires of their parents or authorities, they are attempting a compromise among them, society's expectations, and their own interests and capabilities. Regarding Foreclosure, those subjects are distinguished by not having experienced an exploration phase, but yet stating commitment. They are going to be the same person for whom as a child, others like parents made plans and set goals. Their beliefs (or lack of them) are practically coming from their parents, family, or other sources of social power in their life. A certain inflexibility is the characteristic that distinguishes this identity status from others (Marcia, 1966, 2002).

Marcia (1966) drove the final profiles of each status based on the results of the applied tests. The outcomes were consistent with the assumptions used to distinguish the four different identity statuses. However, some outcomes indicated that although identity diffusion was originally supposed to be the other polar position for identity achievement, it was a polar point for identity achievement only in some accomplishments, and in some other areas although the performance was regularly poorer than the ones from identity achievement, still they were not the lowest among the statuses. For example, in the area of independency, identity foreclosure was the polar position for identity achievement. The self-esteem of the identity achievement group was considerably less vulnerable to challenging feedbacks, and they performed better than other statuses in accomplishing a stressful task, by persevering longer with their efforts in the face of problems and continuing with a realistic level of objective. On the other side of continuum were the participants from identity foreclosure group whose self-esteem was vulnerable to undesirable feedback and their most distinguishing characteristic was their obedience, and respect for authority. What specifically differentiated them from the achievement status was their poor performance in the stressful concept-attainment task with unrealistic reaction to failure and sticking to unattained high goals (Marcia, 1966; Marcia & Friedman, 1970).

Identity development through the lifespan according to E. H. Erikson and J. Marcia

Both theories, Erikson's (1963) on the psychology of development and Marcia's (1966, 2002) on identity development following Erikson's theory as a foundation, have had unique impacts on the understanding of identity construction from a psychological perspective and its influences on the personal development (Louden, 2005). According to Erikson, our ego identity constantly changes due to new experiences and information we acquire in our daily interactions with others and important life events. The challenge of the fifth stage, identity vs. role confusion, offers a clear example of this continuity. Erikson

(1968) supposed that puberty and adolescence were the primary phase of development and giving resolution of said identity crisis. However, he also assumed that identity-related questions can also arise much earlier or later than young adulthood. This means that the questions connected to the identity can arise in the childhood presented in different role playing or role preferences and on the other hand, individuals' identities are still in the process of changing, completing, or achievement, after puberty. Identity negotiation can arise as a consequence of either pleasant (e.g., university graduation, marriage) or unpleasant (e.g., divorce, job-loss) life events. In fact, according to Erikson (1968), development is a never-ending process in its different aspects (McLean & Syed, 2016). However, under optimal conditions, identity achievement is accompanied by an internal sense of uniqueness and direction as well as a social or collective validation about the direction one has chosen (Newman & Newman, 2020).

In Marcia's theory, the processes of exploration and commitment could be active through the person's whole life. Marcia describes identity in terms of crisis and commitment. People experience a crisis when they have to choose between two options in their lives. When they choose an option, they are committing to an identity and the crisis is solved (Berck, 2017). Depending on the life events, social challenges, new political situations and many other social or intimate events in the life, one might re-examine or rebuild his identity or even move from one identity status to another. Moratorium-achievement cycles in lifespan identity development, are cycles in which the identity status of a person changes between moratorium and achievement, and vice versa. This means that individuals might be committed to an identity for a certain period of time in his life (Commitment), but then after some new experiences, changes in their values and attitudes experience a new crisis or doubts about the commitments they have and start searching for a new identity (Exploration). This means that making decisions and being committed in some or all dimensions of identity, does not mean that a new phase of crisis or exploration cannot come (Stephen et al., 1992).

Identity and Identity Crisis in Asylum seekers

Erikson's perspectives and concepts in his classic book entitled "*Identity: Youth and Crisis*", published in 1968, are still relevant today and seem to be timeless. Erikson was concerned with the complications some World War II veterans came across when returning to civilian life, and he became interested in difficulties linked to serious identity diffusion. During the course of this research, he observed that the pathological difficulties that some veterans experienced in leaving one role (soldier) and entering another (civilian) were psychologically similar to the challenges some adolescents experience in their transition from childhood to adulthood (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Serafini & Adams, 2002). Following the arguments in the first section, based on our direct experiences with asylum seekers, and based on the literature and previous studies on asylum seekers/refugees, we find similarities between the identity crisis experienced by a large number of asylum seekers and the identity crisis in puberty. We also assume that the effect of social interaction on identity crisis in asylum seekers is somehow similar to its effect on adolescents. Moreover, we suppose transition role of the phase of identity crisis in asylum seekers to be comparable to the transition role of the 5th stage (Identity vs. Confusion conflict) for adolescents. Finally, we see the role Confusion, asylum seekers and its cause and consequences, to be similar to the role confusion has in adolescents.

Based on all mentioned above, we suppose that the best way to study the identity crisis and development among asylum seekers is to study the four identity statuses based on the theory of Marica (1966, 2002). In our study we administered the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS-2; Bennion & Adams, 1986) to asses the identity status of asylum seekers.

Meaning in Life

In this section we discuss about the theory of "Meaning in Life" of Viktor Frankl and how it is connected to the extreme traumatizing situations like concentration camps (his personal experience). We also refer to the situation of asylum seekers and forced displacement and how it can lead to the feeling of lack of meaning in asylum seekers or help them to find meaning in life.

What is the meaning in life? From Ancient Philosophy to Modern Psychology

Same like the questions related to identity, the question of whether life has meaning or not, has been probably the question of mankind since his first cognitive and intelligent questioning (Boyce, 2001). However, of course the first documented responses to this question are only as old as the first documented philosophical texts.

According to Zoroaster (7th and 6th century BCE) the purpose of life of mankind is to sustain and align itself to aša (Truth). This occurs through active moral contribution to the life, and practicing the principles of constructive thoughts, words and deeds. Zoroaster emphasized the "freedom of the individual" to choose right or wrong and the "individual's responsibility" for one's deeds. This personal choice to admit aša (Truth) and reject druj (Lie) is one's own decision and not a dictate of Ahura Mazda (God). Moreover, the main doctrine of Zoroaster is that the salvation of the person from damnation relied on the entirety of their thoughts, words and deeds, and there could be no intervention by any divine entity to change the outcome. In other words, every person has the responsibility for the destiny of his own soul, and at the same time shares in the responsibility for the destiny of the world (Boyce, 2001).

From the first interpretations of meaning to the most recent psychological perspectives and answers to this question like those presented in "*Psychology of Meaning in Life*" by Schnell (2020), there have been several philosophies, theories and perspectives

focused on this basic human question. However, we are going to describe the theory of "Meaning in Life", developed by Viktor Frankl, an Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist and his approach to psychology and therapy known as "Logotherapy" (Marshall & Marshall, 2012). As a Holocaust survivor, he always had some valuable and real examples which are the result of his own observations and case studies in concentration camps, for different aspects and assumptions of his theory (Frankl, 2000) .

Viktor Frankl (1905-1997) and Meaning in Life

Viktor Frankl's academic career in psychology probably started in 1924 by his first published article in "*The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*", when he was still a student. However, his theory and his unique approach to therapy, was mostly formulated through his valuable observations in Nazi concentration camps. At a certain point in his hard time in concentration camp, he started to look at this painful experience, as an occasion for a real psychological experiment in which he can watch who does and does not survive and why (Frankl, 2000). Simply saying, his main observations can be summarized as: people who had hopes for being together again with their beloved ones, those who had dreams for uncompleted projects to be done or valuable goals to reach, or those with strong faiths, had higher possibilities to survive to the end, than those who had lost all hopes, dreams or faiths that could give their suffering a meaning (Boeree, 2017).

Logotherapy: Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy

Frankl named his approach to psychology and therapy as "logotherapy" which comes from the Greek word logos which can mean study, word, spirit, God, or meaning. The word meaning is the one that Frankl emphases on, while the other meanings are also not irrelevant (Boeree, 2017, Frankl, 2000). Logotherapy is known as the third school of Viennese psychology by Viktor Frankl, in which search for meaning is supposed to be the origin of all

human motivation. It is often compared to the second school of Viennese psychology by Alfred Adler, in which search for will to power is assumed to be the root of human motivation and compared to the first school of Viennese psychology by Sigmund Freud where search for pleasure/will to pleasure is supposed to motivate human's thoughts and behaviour (Barnes, 2000; Boeree, 2017; Esping, 2008; Miller, 2004). Frankl has 29 honorary doctorates from universities across the world and was the first non-American psychiatrist to receive the 1985 Oskar Pfister Prize from the American Psychatric Association in recognition of this significant contributions to psychiatry.

Logotherapy and its Main Concepts

American Psychological Association (APA) Dictionary of Psychology defines Logotherapy as "an approach to psychotherapy that focuses on the "human predicament" helping the client to overcome crises in meaning". Frankl himself states, "By way of a deliberate oversimplification, one could define logotherapy by the literal translation as healing through meaning" (Frankl, 1988, p. 9). Other authors claim "Logotherapy aims to unlock the will to meaning and to assist the patient in seeing a meaning in his life" (Uemura, 2018). On the other hand, Logotherapy is a method in therapy based on theoretical principles including three assumptions, three values and three dimensions (Barnes, 2000; Esping, 2008; Miller, 2004). "In a logotherapy framework, a will to meaning serves as a primary motivator of change, with the recognition that revisions to cognitive structure, agency in decision making, and regulation of strong emotions can be marshalled in a coordinated approach to resolving existential conflicts" (Baumel & Constantino, 2020, p. 1).

The main concepts of logotherapy are logos and meaning. In some debates in Frankl's approach to psychology, logos simply means "meaning" and it is supposed not to have religious implications. Logotherapy is a meaning-focused psychotherapy where individuals are directed toward finding or acknowledging the meaning of their life. That is why the literal

translation of logotherapy is also what Frankl mentions about his function: "healing through meaning" (Frankl, 1988) or "therapy through meaning" (Esping, 2008; Fabry & Frankl, 1969).

For the clinical and therapeutic purposes based on logotherapy, the therapist is supposed to try certain interventions, planned practices to support clients to find the potential "meaning" which might be directly connected to their suffering. In life conditions, including an unchangeable destiny such as unrecoverable disease or inevitable loss, a rationally satisfactory answer to the question "Why me?" can have a very positive impact from a therapeutic point of view. Unfortunately, the answer to the question of "why me" is in many situations beyond human's knowledge and understanding (like the situation of people losing their kids or family members in war). That is why Frankl recommended that it is better to ask "How me" rather than to ask "Why me?" (Barnes, 2000). In these severe cases where suffering cannot be explained or avoided, the only possibility would be to use freedom of will to decide how to stand and how to survive the suffering as fruitful as possible. This can be deeply curing.

Three Different Levels of Meaning

This author distinguishes three levels of meaning which describes as follows:

1. Ultimate Meaning: It is the consciousness that there is an instruction in the universe of which we are a part. According to the logotherapy theory, it is not an established "endpoint" that can be reached or achieved in a concrete way. Rather, it is something to strive toward and to use as a guide for decisions one makes and for paths one takes in life (Uemura, 2018).

2. The Meaning of Life: Meaning of life refers to the belief that each person is one of a kind and is to be treated with dignity, and that each of us has a unique purpose to fullfil. (Wong, 2007).

3. Meaning of the Moment: This can be described as "every unrepeatable moment offers a specific meaning potential. To respond to these meaning potentials is to live a meaningful life" (Wong, 2007, p. 1). Meaning of the moment refers to the situation that each moment in life offers, in which a person can discover meaning and act in a meaningful way. This meaning can be achieved through making decisions on how to think (thoughts), what to say (words), and how to act in certain situations (deeds).

Three main assumptions of Frankl about Human's Life

Within the framework of logotherapy, which accentuates this ever-present possibility of meaning and choice, there are several basic assumptions. One of these assumptions is that life rests on three pillars (Melton & Schulenberg, 2008):

The Freedom of Will: this pillar asserts that a person always has the freedom to choose how he or she reacts to a given life circumstance. This freedom is actually the freedom to choose about how to respond to a certain set of life conditions. The individual cannot always change a certain situation by choosing his words and behaviours but by changing his viewpoints and attitudes, he influences on the way that situation is affecting him (Barnes, 2000). One of the best examples he presented was the one mentioned above that he started looking at himself, as a future lecturer on "the psychology of the concentration camp" rather than a simple prisoner.

The Will to Meaning: this pillar states that "human beings' first motive is to find meaning in his life and live a meaningful life". The will to meaning is the primary motivation for acting in different situations and goes deeper than the will to pleasure (as Freud claims) or will to power (as Adler claims). People have freedom under all circumstances to activate will to meaning (Barnes, 2000). Frankl presented the example of a hunger strike as an evidence saying that people sometimes choose not to eat, even to die for a reason that they believe to

be more valuable than themselves. He believed that these examples confirm that the search for meaning is stronger than the motivations for pleasure or power.

The Meaning of Life: this pillar maintains that meaning can be found in every life condition, regardless of how ordinary or tragic it is, even in the most painful situations (Barnes, 2000). According to Frankl, what should be our dynamic is not the profound questions about the magnificent, complete meaning of life but rather the meanings of our life here and now, that could be different from one day to another, depending on the situation (Esping, 2008).

Uniqueness of the Individual and Responsibility

Frank's viewpoint on the meaning of life is closely associated with another key perspective: the uniqueness of the individual. Based on Frankl's perspective, since each person is unique with unique potentials and skills, and no one is like any other person in the world, so each person can play his especial role in a way that is unique to him and cannot be replaced by the role of somebody else. As a result, then, it is each person's responsibility to accomplish the tasks the life leaves on his way day by day with the aid of his unique possibilities and abilities. In this process, responsibility (literally, the ability to respond) transforms into responsibleness (the act of being responsible). According to Frankl, this responsibleness is the very "essence of existence" (Esping, 2008).

Freedom, Responsibility and Responsibleness

With freedom comes responsibility. Frankl creates a difference between responsability, which he defines as a way of possessing the freedom of will, and responsibleness, refering to the employment of said freedom in order to meet the demands of each situation rightgeously (Wong, 2020). "Spirituality, freedom, and responsibility are the three constituents of human existence. They do not only characterize human existence as the

existence of a person in particular; rather they constitute it as such. In this sense, human spirituality is not a characteristic, but a constitutive feature: The spiritual is not just inherent to human beings as physical and mental qualities which are inherent to animals as well. The spiritual is a distinctive feature of the human being, which is inherent to him and only to him. Naturally, an airplane does not cease to be an airplane if it moves only on the ground. It can, and indeed must, move on the ground over and over again, but that it really is an airplane only becomes evident when it lifts off into the sky" (Frankl, 1990, p. 8).

Existential Vacuum and the Emptiness Experienced by Asylum Seekers

If having meaning in life is our first motivation, then having no meaning is a bothering feeling of a hole, an emptiness in our lives. One of the elegant concepts in Frankl's theory is "Existential vacuum" that is coming from this emptiness. Frankl argues that when we have a vacuum, of course, things rush in to fill it. He states that one of the most noticeable signs of existential vacuum in our societies is boredom (Boeree, 2017; Frankl, 2000). He refers to Sunday Neurosis, which is kind of depression which affects people who become aware of the lack of content in their lives when the pressure of the eventful week is removed and the void within the person becomes apparent. According to Frankl (2000) the existentially frustrated people are disappointed as they assume they have nothing meaningful to fill their existential vacuum. His arguments on the effect of lack of meaning in life or presence of meaning are so often tested and approved in several researches that have shown the positive effect of finding meaning in life on the mental health of the people with depression or other psychological challenges (Glaw et al., 2016; Jamshidi et al., 2012b; Steger et al., 2008; Yek et al., 2017).

Most asylum seekers have experienced these extreme situations, to some extent. The most recent and clear example of such horrific conditions is the life of people in Afghanistan, who in a short time, have lost their home, their jobs, their security and everything and have to

run away from Taliban very secretly, from one roof to another. Some have also already lost one or more family members in a terrifying way. On the other hand, our observations on asylum seeker's life in the country of destination through practical and face to face work with them, calls attention to this phenomenon that many of them shortly after meeting their basic needs in the country of destination, experience kind of emptiness or lack of meaning that they do not really know how to deal with. Beside the traumas that could bring this emptiness as a symptom, we suppose that another main source for these feelings of lack of meaning in asylum seekers is that they do not have the same tasks, duties, responsibilities, goals and hopes that they had in their home country. In other words, they have lost many of the sources of meaning in life in the country of origin, and now they need to find the meaning in the current life situation in the host country. However, many of them do not really know what the real origin of their feelings of meaninglessness or emptiness is, or even they are wondering why they do not feel better despite having security or social aid in the country of destination.

Considering the difficulties of the situation of asylum seekers and all the sorrow they experience before and after arriving to the country of destination, we could recall the concept of freedom of will even under the most horrific circumstances, and the evidence that Frankl referred to about the situation in concentration camps (Esping, 2008). He believed that in facing with the same unbearable situation, one person might corrupt while another might attain virtual saintliness (Frankl, 2000). Referring to his own experience and destiny which also changed in very short time, from a psychiatrist working in a hospital who is saving lives, to a simple prisoner who could lose his life at any moment, he paid a specific attention to the attitude individuals take in extreme conditions, as the last freedom they have. This attitude is the last opportunity that allows the person to preserve some control in any tragic situation (Frankl, 2000; Uemura, 2018). Based on his theory and so many researches supporting his arguments, we know how important for mental health is to have a meaning and purpose in

life (Glaw et al., 2016; Steger et al., 2008; Yek et al., 2017) and we assume it is even more important in the situation of asylum seekers.

In our research, we assessed meaning and purpose in life in asylum seekers administering the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ; Steger et al., 2006) and Purpose in Life Test (PIL; Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964). We discuss about these challenges, causes and effects, based on the literature and our results in further sections of this thesis.

Personality

What is Personality? Different Approaches to its Study

People's interest in understanding what differentiates them from others, has also a long history, like the concepts of identity and meaning in life. Since the first philosophical documents to the most recent psychological studies on personality, there have been many definitions for personality, as well as a lot of personality theories. If one would ask why are there so many different perspectives and theories on personality, there is a simple answer for it "personality is a complex concept covering many behavioural (sometimes not only behavioural) phenomena" (Bratko et al., 2017). It seems that somehow the way people think and the way they behave has been always under its focus since the ancient time (Boyce, 2001). However, probably the closer to the present time we are, the focus is rather on thoughts, feelings and behaviours. According to Haller and Müller (2008), a person's thoughts, feelings and behaviours set them apart from the others and gives them the appearance of being unique. Moreover, personality characteristics determine behaviour, attitudes and emotions to a great degree (Pervin, 2000).

The definition of Personality according to the American Psychological Association (APA, 2022) also refers to "individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving", and these patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are what make a person unique. Also, according to APA, the study of personality emphasizes on two broad

zones: One is to comprehend individual differences in specific personality features, such as sociability or irritability, and the other, is to understand how the various fragments of an individual come together as a whole.

At the same time, we should consider that the way personality is seen and defined depends on the model used to approach its study. Therefore, there are different schools in psychology with different perspectives to individual's psychology and their personality. These perspectives have led to several theories on personality that can be usually categorized in one of these schools of thoughts (Carver & Scheier, 2011; Schultz & Schultz, 2016). Based on these perspectives, there are a variety of explanations on how personality emerges (based on environment or genes), how it develops (which influences are stronger, environmental or genetic) and whether or not it changes within the time.

One of the most known perspectives with the high indication of the environmental effects is psychoanalytic perspective which is first time presented by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). He believed that the personality of human being emerges and shapes trough some stages, starting from the birth and in certain sequences. Based on Freud's personality theory, the human psyche (personality) is structured into three parts the id, ego and superego, all developing at different stages in our lives. These are systems, not parts of the brain (Schultz & Schultz, 2016). He introduces his theory of unconscious, as a level of awareness which is beyond the conscious level, influenced by different experiences, especially traumatic ones, and that influences our thoughts, words and behaviours (McLeod, 2017).

Another approach to psychology and personality, that strongly indicates on the individual's freedom and responsibility in their choices and behaviours, rather than the influence of the genes or environment, is the existential approach. Existential psychology focuses on core aspects of human existence, such as death, isolation, and meaninglessness. The ideas of philosophers such as Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Martin Heidegger, who set forth topics such as the anxiety inherent to the human condition, free will,

and the concept of being, respectively, were later included into the psychological studies of leading figures in the field such as Viktor Frankl (Menzies, 2020). Frankl believed that personality works in three different dimensions and levels of physical, psychological, and spiritual. He believed that not just our genetics or environment, but how we deal with what we have been handed shapes our personalities.

The main and most known approach to the study of personality with a strong indication on the influence of biology, and also with high level of experimental evidences is the trait perspective which is known as Dispositional Perspective. The trait approach to personality is one of the major achievements of psychology, although burning questions remain. Undeniably, the contemporary approaches to traits brought together a new perspective on "the old problems" and have led to important advances in the field (Fajkowska & Kreitler, 2018). At the same time, this approach is the one with the most empirical support among all others (Gomà-i-Freixanet et al., 2019).

In our research, we were interested to focus on the personal and individual factors that have an effect on the Identity crisis and Identity formation or reformation of asylum seekers, as most other available research is mainly concentrated on environmental or external causes. We have decided to study the personality of asylum seekers as we were interested in knowing if personality factors play a role in the process of finding new meanings and purposes in the host country. That is why we were drawing out our observations and interpretations of what we have experienced with asylum seekers, in terms of some interactions between their personal characteristics and their assumed Identity Status.

To have a scientific approach and pattern for our assumptions, we needed a quantitative, reliable and valid measure, that could categorize our assumed characteristics in a well-defined and universally approved set of variables of personality traits, based on one of stablished models of studying personality. For example, what we observed so often was that people who are more organized, more hardworking with higher levels of commitments and

sense of responsibility, were more likely progressing in rebuilding their identity or defining a new meaning, compared to those who were weaker in these characteristics. From these characteristics, we could easily connect our observations to the personality factor of conscientiousness from Five Factor Model, which could be measured by the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992a), the personality questionnaire that has gained an accepted reliability in Persian language. Another example of our observations was that the asylum seekers who are more interested in social events, meetings and networking who are also good and interested in group activities and team working, were also more possibly be consciously and purposefully explore something that they could be committed to do regularly. These characteristics were very well included in the factor of extraversion. A combination of mentioned observations and many others, brought us to the point that the five-factor model of personality, which is based on the lexical approach, is something that best expresses our assumed hypothesizes about the personality of asylum seekers in relationship to their identity, and meaning in life.

Finally, in order to have a more scientific approach and specifically to use a quantitative methodology rather than a qualitative one, we chose the disposal perspective to the study of personality. In this part of our introduction, we concentrate on how this approach emerged, developed and stablished as a scientific framework for studying personality.

The Trait Perspective to Personality

Probably the most specific approach to study the diversity in people's reactions to certain conditions is to investigate how they are traced back to the different personality characteristics. The questions like: why some people are more actively building social connections and making friends compared to the others, why some people are more fulfilled with their job, family and environment than others, or some have a very optimistic perspective to the life even in the very challenging situations, are usually better answered

considering people's personality. Although the socio-demographic characteristics, childhood experiences and life events or personal attitudes and choices could explain some of these differences; however, even individuals from the same social circumstances could present a lot of diversity in their thoughts, feelings and reactions to the same life conditions and situations, and sometimes people of different cultures, professional status and educational level are very similar in their personality characteristics, and their level of life satisfaction (Haller & Müller, 2008).

Nowadays, it is supposed by many psychologists studying personality that it originates from within the individual and remains fairly consistent throughout life. From this point of view, another definition of personality can be conceptualized as: "the set of psychological traits and mechanisms within the individual that are organized and relatively enduring, and influence his or her interactions with, and adaptations to, the intrapsychic, physical, and social environments" (Larsen & Buss, 2012, p. 4). A more concrete and measurable one can be from Hans J. Eysenck who defines personality as "the sum total of the actual or potential behaviour patterns of the organism, as determined by heredity and environment. It originates and develops through the functional interactions of the four main sectors into which these behaviour patterns are organized. The cognitive sectors (intelligence), conative sector (character), affective sector (temperament) and the somatic sector (constitution)" (Eysenck, 1997, p. 25).

The trait perspective of personality is mostly concentrated on identifying, describing, and measuring certain traits that together build up human personality (Fleeson, 2001). By understanding these traits, researchers believe they can better comprehend the differences between individuals. Considering the results of numerous studies, what differentiates most the trait perspective from other perspectives of personality is that it partially assumes that personality is the product of internal features that are genetically based (Fleeson & Jayawickreme, 2015).

The Trait Theories of Personality

Like other theories of personality, most trait theories share some assumptions that differentiates them from other theories, perspectives and schools of psychology. Some basic assumptions about the trait-based theories of personality from the three founding fathers of trait psychology—Gordon Allport, Raymond Cattell and Hans J. Eysenck—are: a) Traits establish the structure of personality, b) Traits can explain different internal aspects of a person and differences between individuals, and c) Traits are measurable and relatively independent of each other.

Although, there are still a lot of considerably important questions about traits that have not been fully answered, like: What are traits? What is the relationship between the traits and behaviours? How are our emotions connected or associated with the traits? How are exactly traits playing roles in our daily life? (Funder & Fast, 2010), trait perspectives and theories have surprisingly survived from their first origins in ancient times until today, and even more, they gain more and more attention within the time. But why? A convincing answer might be that we need to acknowledge traits simply as a necessary tool in daily life in order to explain wishes, desires, differences with other people, our level of interest in building contact with other people, or how our impressions about other people affect our daily life. Although not all of us are studying the human beings scientifically, but almost all of us have kind of contact with others where we need to be able to introduce or justify ourselves in ways that are known for most people. These are the situations where we automatically refer to the traits, even in a non-scientific category or style (Fajkowska & Kreitler, 2018; Kreitler, 2018).

What are the Traits and how do we measure them? Different Approaches

A trait is in most cases, defined as a fairly constant characteristic that is the source of the individual's certain ways of feeling, thinking and behaving. The personality is then the combination and results of interaction of various traits in the individual that is unique to himself (Boeree, 2017; Fajkowska & Kreitler, 2018). Trait theory is focused on identifying and measuring these individual personality characteristics. These theories have long attempted to pin down exactly how many personality traits exist and how we can measure them.

Among different approaches to categorize and measure the traits, the lexical approach seems to be the fundamental one, with the longest history in human's struggles to understand themselves (De Raad & Mlačić et al., 2015). This approach states that people encode in their everyday languages all those differences between individuals that they perceive to be salient and that they consider to be socially relevant in their everyday lives (Uher, 2013). Between Galton (1884) and Cattell (1943a, 1943b) there is a clear evolution where ideas for a glossary of personality were given form as well as the categorization of personality trait terms created. During this time, the main principles of the psycho-lexical approach were formulated, firstly with Galton and continued notably by Allport and Odbert (1936), resulting in a reasoning that had, according to the previously mentioned authors, "portion of plausibility" (De Raad & Mlačić et al., 2015).

Gordon Allport is the best known for taking this approach to study the traits for the first time. The other approach which was introduced later by Raymond Cattell, is the factorial approach. This is an approach to describe human personality traits using factor analytical methods. Through factor analysis Cattell's Factorial Theory of Personality was the first to introduce a multi-level, hierarchical model of personality traits (Cattell, 1945).

Trait Theory of Gordon Allport (1897-1967): The Conceptual Groundwork of the Five

Factor Model

While the center of psychological endeavour turned to the United States from Germany, the lexical approach also shifted. Allport and Odbert (1936) undertook the task of analysing Webster's entire dictionary and selected nearly 18,000 words they considered potentially useful for the description of personality. The words were then classified into four categories according to their descriptiveness for everyday conversation and differentiation. Allport can be considered one of the precursors of the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality with his psycho-lexical study of English language adjectives that described personality. His studies settled the conceptual and empirical framework of what nowadays is known as the FFM of personality.

In sum, Allport developed a new approach in understanding personality based on the study of the traits, in which, he highlighted the uniqueness of each individual, indicated on the present situation (rather than the past like psychoanalytic), and the influence of individual characteristics (rather than environmental influences), for a more concrete and realistic understanding of the personality (Boeree, 2017; Schultz & Schultz, 2016).

The Factorial Approach of Raymond Cattell (1905-1998) and the 16 Personality Factors

The two most prominent individual differences researchers of the twentieth century were Hans J. Eysenck and Raymond B. Cattell. Both were giants of scientific psychology, each publishing several books and hundreds of empirical peer-reviewed journal articles.

Raymond Cattell first implemented a lexical approach that generated a copious number of primary and secondary normal and abnormal personality trait dimensions, that were assessed by the Sixteen Personality Factor questionnaire (16PF) and the Clinical Analysis Questionnaire (CAQ) respectively (Boyle et al., 2016). He defined traits as comparatively permanent response tendencies that are the fundamental components of the

personality (Schultz & Schultz, 2016). Cattell selected 171 of Allport's initial list of over 4000, by eliminating uncommon traits and combining common characteristics.

Cattell took a factorial approach in which by using factor analysis, he identified closely related terms and eventually reduced his list to just 16 key personality factors that he believed could be utilized to understand and measure individual differences in personality (Friedman, et al., 1976; Schultz & Schultz, 2016). According to Cattell, these 16 factors are the source of all human personality and were those who constituted one of the most widely used personality assessment tool known as the "16 Personality Factor" questionnaire (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2014).

Hans H. Eysenck (1916-1997) and the Three Dimensions of Personality

Within the personality realm, British psychologist Hans J. Eysenck adopted a practical three-factor model as measured via the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) and its variants (Boyle et al., 2016). He developed a model of personality based upon just three universal dimensions (Eysenck, 1997; Schultz & Schultz, 2016) as follows:

Neuroticism vs. Emotional stability. This dimension contrasts moodiness with even temperedness. Stability is the propensity to maintain a consistent emotional state, whereas neuroticism refers to the person's proclivity to become agitated or emotional.

Extraversion vs. Introversion. Extraversion refers to concentrating attention outward on other people and their surroundings, whereas introversion entails directing this attention to interior experiences. An individual with a high level of extraversion may be friendly and outgoing, while a person high in introversion may be quiet and reserved.

Psychoticism. Eysenck later added this dimension after examining people with mental illness. A high score on this attribute frequently struggle to deal with reality and can be aggressive, antisocial, lack empathy, and manipulative.

According to Eysenck, the society needs the variety presented by people categorized by all features of these three personality dimensions. Moreover, an ideal society support people with the possibilities to make the best practice of their traits and abilities. At the same time, some people will adapt better than the other to the demands and challenges of their social environment. Empirical confirmation of the biological basis of Eysenck's stance has been provided by molecular genetics, providing with a better conception of the underlying factors of individual differences (Boyle et al., 2016).

The Five Factor Theory of Personality

After considerable numbers of research on Cattell's and Eysenck's theories, some academics concluded that Eysenck assumed very few dimensions and Cattell considered too many factors. Robert McCrae (1949–) and Paul Costa (1942–) began a large-scale research program that resulted in the identification of the Big Five Factors: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (McCrae & Costa, 1985, 1987). More than 25 years and hundreds of studies later, one of the originators of the five-factor model accurately described it as marking "a turning point in the history of personality psychology" (McCrae, 2011, p. 210).

McCrae and Costa's Big Five Personality Factors

The early investigations of Cattell (1943a, 1947) were also a useful source of information for Costa and McCrae (1985), who were interested in employing a measure of personality in the context of aging studies, in addition to the work of Allport, which provided a lexical foundation for the Five Factor Model. Extraversion and Neuroticism were found to be two repeating clusters in the Cattell's 16PF (Costa & McCrae, 1976), but there was also a hint of their future significant dimension of Openness to Experience. Coan's (1972, 1974) Experience Inventory, which was created to gauge the various aspects of experiences, is

where the term "openness to experience" first appeared. The instrument had the objective of to research the humanistic ideal of a personality, with openness to new experiences being considered a key component. Costa and McCrae (1985) added later Openness to Experience to their model.

For the scales of Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness to Experience, six facets were selected for their measurement in the original NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1985). They eventually included Agreeableness and Conscientiousness to their model, which then became the FFM, because the correlations between the three NEO scales and Goldberg's Agreeableness and Conscientiousness scales were insignificant (Costa and McCrae, 1992b). Additionally, Costa and McCrae oversaw studies (Costa et al., 1985; Costa & McCrae, 1992c; McCrae & Costa, 1985) that connected the five variables to other projecting personality tests and models such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), Eysenck's model, and Wiggins' circumplex. These investigations convinced Costa and McCrae that these five factors were basic pillars of personality due to the discovered significant and meaningful relationships between all the studied personality measurements and the FFM dimensions. Meanwhile, numerous authors such as Goldberg and Rosolack (1994) considered the Big Five a comprehensive framework for the study of personality (Goldberg & Sweeney, 1996). With all the knowledge accumulated throughout the years, Costa and McCrae (e.g., McCrae, 2011; McCrae & Costa, 2008) developed the Five-Factor Theory (FFT), that goes a step beyond the conventional explanation of the Big Five by arguing that the five factors are not merely descriptive, but also universal and with strong genetic and biological bases (De Raad & Mlačić et al., 2015).

These five factors were confirmed through a variety of assessment techniques including self-ratings, objective tests, and observers' reports. This model asserts that each personality domain is a spectrum and represents a continuum in which everyone stays on a

certain point (Schulz & Schulz, 2016). Therefore, individuals are ranked on a scale between the two extreme ends.

McCrae and Costa developed a personality test, the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI), using an acronym derived from the initials of the first three factors. The test is available in a number of revised forms. The factors were determined to be reliable for the description of personality due to their regular observation in various assessment procedures. This five-factor model of personality represents five core domains that interact to form human personality (McCrae & Sutin, 2018).

Moreover, the stability of the Five Factors over time has been a subject of numerous research, some of which appears to give contradictory findings. It is important to keep in mind that the results may vary according to the country, and, most significantly, the age range (Schultz & Schultz, 2016).

Considering the important role of personality factors in understanding people's thoughts, behaviours, coping and other associated characteristics (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Feil & Hasking, 2008; Gomà-i-Freixanet, 2001; Jamshidi et al., 2015; Ramos-Grille et al., 2013) and the relationship between these personality factors and identity statuses (Crocetti et al., 2008; Hatano et al., 2017; Hill et al., 2010, 2013; Klimstra, 2012; Luyckx et al., 2006) and also meaning and purpose in life (Demirbaş-Çelik & Korkut-Owen, 2018; Schnell & Becker, 2006), in our research, to assess personality factors we used the NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992a).

In the next section, we are going to review the available literature on the relationship between personality factors, identity statuses, meaning and purpose in life.

Interplay between Personality, Identity Status and Meaning in Life

Since in the available literature on refugees and asylum seekers we did not find any published study undertaking these three concepts at a time, in this section we are going to

examine the available data grouped in pairs of these three concepts. To have a basic foundation for our study based on the available literature and research history, we looked for studies on refugees or asylum seekers, investigating the relationship between personality and identity, and also personality and meaning in life, and finally identity and meaning in life.

Personality and Identity Status

The relationship between personality and identity seems thoroughly reasonable, that is why there have been a lot of studies conducted on this subject from different aspects, with different measures and sometimes in combination with other variables within last years, but yet there is a lot to be known, understood and studied about these two concepts in different groups of people, especially migrants and asylum seekers. In psychological studies, one of the previous challenges was that personality dimensions were assessed through many items; however, the recent efforts made to develop and validate short inventories to measure the "Big Five" have made studying personality and its relationship with identity easier (Haller & Müller, 2008).

In the next lines we are going to comment on two studies conducted in Iran since they can be compared to our study as the questionnaires and the samples used were comparable to ours. Hosseininasab et al. (2009), conducted a study with female students to stablish the relationship between personality and identity status by administering the NEO-FFI and the Identity Status Questionnaire (OMEIS-2; Adams et al., 1979). The findings indicated a significant positive correlation between Neuroticism and both Identity Confusion and Identity Moratorium; between Openness and Identity Foreclosure, and Extroversion and Conscientiousness both correlated whit Identity Achievement. The authors did not find a significant relationship between Agreeableness and any of the identity statuses.

Another similar study is the one conducted by Nedaeifar et al. (2019). These authors were interested in knowing if the big five-factors of personality and identity status could

predict self-concept in a sample of 108 students from the University of Tehran (50% female) in the age range of 20-30 years old. Participants answered the NEO-FFI, Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS-2; Bennion & Adams, 1986), and the Rogers's Self-concept scale. Results indicated that Identity Achievement showed a significant negative correlation with Neuroticism and a significant positive one with Extraversion and Conscientiousness. There was also a significant negative correlation between Openness and Agreeableness with Identity Diffusion. And finally, the same level of significant positive correlation was found between Openness and Foreclosure Identity. However, we should consider that the results of these two studies in Iran could not be conclusive as they were undertaken in university samples which are not representative of the general population samples.

One of the questions brought up in the field of the relationship between personality traits and identity processes, especially in early and middle puberty, is the question about the direction of this relationship. Although several studies have been done (Crocetti et al., 2008; Hatano et al., 2017; Hill et al., 2010, 2013; Klimstra, 2012; Luyckx et al., 2006), but yet there are a lot of questions on the dynamics of this relationship. Hatano et al. (2017) conducted a study to investigate the dynamic relationship between personality, based on the Big Five and identity during puberty (5th Stage of Erikson's theory). To facilitate a better understanding of the longitudinal associations between personality and identity, they collected data from 1,233 Japanese in early and middle puberty time. Their results revealed evidences of a bidirectional relationship between personality and identity. Additionally, the findings showed that there were statistically significant differences in the patterns of relationships between some personality traits and identity dimensions in two age groups. In another study, "identity continuity did exhibit a slight positive association with personality stability when personality was measured using a holistic ipsative approach. Additionally, identity continuity predicted a

mean-level increase in agreeableness and a mean-level decrease in neuroticism" (Dunkel & Worsley, 2016, p. 13).

These results challenge the dispositional perspective and the theories that assume personality as something people are born with and resistant to change within the time. At the same time, they call attention to the necessity of more studies on the assumed influence of personality on identity especially in the period of puberty.

Personality and Meaning in Life

The relationship between personality and meaning in life, has been also studied in other groups of people different from ours. Demirbaş-Çelik and Korkut-Owen (2018) investigated the relationship between personality and meaning in life by means of a structural model. The model included stability and plasticity as independent variables, presence of meaning as the dependent variable and the wellness as the mediating variable. According to the findings, they stated that the stability trait including neuroticism, agreeableness and conscientiousness did not predict meaning in life. However, the plasticity trait did predict meaning in life. Moreover, wellness mediates the relationship between plasticity and meaning in life. They concluded that the level of people's comprehension of the meaning of life expands as a result of the plasticity trait's development in extraversion and openness caused an increase in the level of individuals' understanding of meaning in life.

In another research conducted by Steger et al. (2008) to investigate the relationship between personality and meaning in life, they administered the NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992a) and the MLQ (Steger et al., 2006) among others. They recruited undergraduate psychology students ($n = 5275$) from a large USA Midwestern university. The results showed that students with high scores in search for meaning obtained also higher scores on Neuroticism, Openness, and Agreeableness. Correlations of search for meaning and presence

of meaning dimensions fit a mirroring pattern for Neuroticism, a convergent pattern for Openness, and an independent pattern for Conscientiousness.

Other authors as Schnell and Becker (2006) studied the relationship between personality and Meaningfulness and Sources of Meaning by administrating the Sources of Meaning and Meaningfulness Questionnaire (SoMe) (Schnell, 2009). Participants were 202 men and women from all over Germany. Based on the findings of their study, it seems that individuals have a disposition for a particular source of meaning according their personality profile: Extraverts seem to be prone to experience their lives as meaningful while those high on Neuroticism seem to be prone to have some sources of meaning.

Another study from Addad (1987) investigated the association between extraversion, neuroticism and meaning in life in a comparative research of 140 imprisoned criminals and 306 non-criminals. Results showed a negative correlation between meaning in life and neuroticism. No relation was found with extraversion. The author concluded that in specific cases criminal behaviours can be a substitute for the meaning in life.

Same like personality and identity, the relationship between personality and meaning in life has been sometimes studied in connection with other variables. For example, Işıka and Üzbe (2015) examined the impact of positive and negative affect (PANAS) and personality (Adjective-Based Personality Scale) on MLQ in a sample of 335 participants. Based on the outcomes, "Positive affect, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness correlated with both search for meaning and presence of meaning in life" (Işıka and Üzbe, 2015, p. 1). Moreover, presence of meaning was significantly and negatively correlated with negative affect and neuroticism. At the same time, multiple regression analysis showed that openness, neuroticism and positive affect are predictors of presence of meaning in life, and extraversion and negative affect predict the search for meaning.

Identity Status and Meaning in Life.

Although the relationship between identity and meaning in life, has not been investigated in the groups of asylum seekers, however, there are studies in other groups on the relationship of these two variables that were valuable and considerable as a background for our research.

One of the most relevant study to ours was the one by Rahiminezhad et al. (2011) in Iran. They studied the effect of "Purpose in Life" (PIL) on two identity dimensions including Exploration and Commitment measured by the Dimensions of Identity Development Scale (DIDS-2; Luyckx et al., 2008), and on two mental health challenge including Depression and Anxiety in a group of high school and university students. Their findings revealed that Purpose in Life significantly and positive predicted commitment, and significantly and negative Depression and Anxiety. However, there was no significant effect of purpose in life on Exploration. Results also indicated that both Exploration and Commitment have also significant negative effects on both Depression and Anxiety. Moreover, Commitment mediates the relationship between Purpose in Life and both Depression and Anxiety. They explained that the nonsignificant effect of Purpose in Life on exploration might show that the more people have a determined purpose in their life, the less possible they explore other choices and options.

In most studies, where the relationship between identity and meaning in life is investigated, the instrument used for measuring identity is the Identity Style Inventory (ISI) proposed by Berzonsky (1989). The study of identity has its origin in Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. Based on Erikson's theory (1950), this scale clarifies three identity styles as different ways of building personal identity: a) Informational, b) Normative, and c) Diffuse-Avoidant. Based on the definition of every identity style, we can see the similarities between these three aforementioned styles and the four statuses of Marcia's theory (1966).

To have a better insight on how the Identity Style Inventory functions regarding to the questionnaire we apply in our research the EOM-EIS-2, and to have a better understanding of the studies applying this scale, we considered the results of a research by Schwartz et al. (2000). The study found support for the hypothesized links among ego identity statuses and identity styles, in which they also studied personal expressiveness. "The Identity Achieved status was found to be associated with high use of the Informational style, low use of the Diffuse/Avoidant style, and with scores indicating the highest amount of involvement in personally expressive activities (although not significantly higher than those of Foreclosed individuals). Participants in the Moratorium status were the lowest in use of the Normative style, generally low in use of the Diffuse/Avoidant style, and fairly low in involvement in personally expressive activities. Foreclosures demonstrated the strongest linkage to use of the Normative style, were low in use of the Diffuse/Avoidant style, and were intermediate with respect to personally expressive activities. Participants in the Identity Diffused status showed the reverse pattern to that of Identity Achievers. They had the highest scores for the Diffuse/Avoidant style, the lowest scores for the Informational style" (Schwartz et al., 2000, p. 517). Based on the correlations between the variables of these two measures, one can have some insight about the implication of research using the Identity Style (Berzonsky, 1989) and the one used in our study.

On the other hand, Babaj and Sruti Lall (2018) studied the relationship between three identity styles based on the model of Berzonsky (1989) using the MLQ (Steger et al., 2006). Their sample included one hundred ninety-nine women of 17-20 years old in India. Outcomes of the research indicated a positive significant association between presence of meaning and normative style and a negative significant association between this subscale and diffuse-avoidant identity styles. Search for meaning in life was positively correlated with information-oriented style and normative styles. This outcome contrasts with the results obtained by Beaumont (2009), where search for meaning was positively related with

normative and diffuse styles but had no significant relationship with informational style. It is possible that "given the cultural context and stage of adolescence of the present sample, that searching for meaning in one's life has a stronger association with exploration of one's identity in a proactive, reflective manner and a similar association with identity exploration in a reactive manner" (Babaj & Sruti Lall, 2018, p. 113). At the same time, in the study by Beaumont (2009), information-oriented identity style also positively predicted the presence of meaning.

In another research conducted by Bahadori Khosroshah and Aliloo (2012), they explored the relationship between identity styles based on the model of Berzonsky (1989) and MLQ, on a sample of two hundred university students in Iran. Data analyses showed that those with information-oriented and normative identity styles had higher scores on meaning in life scale, and those with lower scores on meaning in life were distinguished to have diffuse-avoidant identity styles. A 26% of the variance in meaning in life scores was explained by informative and confused/avoidant identities. They point out that it seems that those who have a "clear notion of who they are", benefit from a more "meaningful life".

Finally, Beaumont (2009) investigated the relationship between individual differences in identity processing styles (Berzonsky, 1989) of young adults with two variables of personal wisdom (self-actualization and self-transcendence), and two related variables of MLQ and subjective happiness. Results revealed that both identity commitment and an information-oriented identity style have a positive and significant correlation with self-actualization and self-transcendence. When levels of identity commitment were controlled via hierarchical regression, self-actualization and self-transcendence were positively predicted by the information-oriented identity style. Structural equation modelling also illustrated that an information-oriented identity style could be a positive predictor of self-actualization and self-transcendence, which also positively predicts the presence of meaning

and subjective happiness. This path model was not found for either the normative or diffuse-avoidant identity style.

Objectives and Hypotheses

Statement of the research question

The identity crisis, or identity confusion among refugees and asylum seekers have been largely studied (Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000; Wehrle et al., 2018), but the research has mainly focused on its effects on mental health and the subsequent failure in their process of integration. As a result of these studies, and in order to improve this process of integration through social interventions, the most recent research has incorporated environmental variables. However, in the equation of identity crisis and failure to integration, not only environmental variables count, but individual variables and personality too.

From our personal experience in the camps, we know that the environment is very similar from one camp to another, yet, some refugees and asylum seekers do best that others. Consequently, in our research we wanted to incorporate these individual and personality variables that could help us to understand which other personal variables would mediate in the equation. Therefore, in our study we incorporated the assessment of personality and also the assessment of Identity Statuses and Purpose and Meaning in Life. This bunch of variables and their interrelationship could help us to give a better insight in order to intervene in a more tailored and personalized way.

A review of the literature indicates that there have been several studies on the relationship between Identity Statuses and Personality (Hosseininasab et al., 2009; Nedaeifar et al., 2019), but mostly have been focused on adolescents (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2008; Hatano et al., 2017). In the same way, there have been studies investigating the relationship between Identity Statuses and Meaning in life (Rahiminezhad et al., 2011; Schwartz et al., 2000) but not among asylum seekers. Therefore, due to the lack of studies relating Personality, Identity Status and Meaning in Life in asylum seekers groups, our aim was to study these three

concepts at a time. We are confided that these concepts are less likely to be affected by environmental factors and thus offer us an opportunity to intervene in a more focused psychological point of view, letting us intervene not only from the socio-environment perspective, but from the psychological perspective too. Instilling or reinstalling meaning in life to asylum seekers may be as healing as environmental interventions and probably could go hand by hand.

Therefore, the main aim of this study was to assess Identity Status, Meaning and Purpose in life, and Personality, and check how they interact in a sample of asylum seekers based in Germany as these concepts play an important role in their own personal development and process of integration in the country of destination.

Up to our knowledge, this is the first research investigating the effect of personality on identity and meaning and purpose in life among asylum seekers in Germany. This study will provide psychologists and social workers in this field a more in-depth understanding of asylum seekers psychological challenges and needs, and the reason why they take a given decision in challenging situations.

Objectives

From what haven said before, the objectives of this study are:

Objective 1. To asses and describe personality factors, identity status, meaning and purpose in life of two samples: one living in their homeland at Iran (the local group) and another one having migrated to Germany as asylum seeker (the asylum seeker group).

Objective 2. In the asylum seeker group, to determine which personality factor/s predict a given identity status.

Objective 3. In the asylum seeker group, to determine which personality factor/s predict meaning in life and/or purpose in life.

Objective 4. In the asylum seeker group, to determine which identity status/es predict meaning in life and/or purpose in life.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. The local group and the asylum seeker group would significantly differ in their identity status, meaning and purpose in life, and personality profile.

Hypothesis 2. In the asylum seeker group, Neuroticism would positively predict and Conscientiousness would negatively predict Identity Diffusion.

Hypothesis 3. In the asylum seeker group, Agreeableness would positively predict and Openness would negatively predict Identity Foreclosure.

Hypothesis 4. In the asylum seeker group, Extraversion would positively predict Identity Moratorium.

Hypothesis 5. In the asylum seeker group, Conscientiousness would positively predict Identity Achievement.

Hypothesis 6. In the asylum seeker group, Extraversion would positively predict Search for Meaning.

Hypothesis 7. In the asylum seeker group, Neuroticism would negatively predict and Conscientiousness would positively predict Presence of Meaning.

Hypothesis 8. In the asylum seeker group, Neuroticism would negatively predict and Conscientiousness would positively predict Purpose in Life.

Hypothesis 9. In the asylum seeker group, Identity Foreclosure would negatively predict and Identity Moratorium would positively predict Search for Meaning.

Hypothesis 10. In the asylum seeker group, Identity Diffusion would negatively predict and Identity Achievement would positively predict Presence of Meaning.

Hypothesis 11. In the asylum seeker group, Identity diffusion would negatively predict and Identity Achievement would positively predict Purpose in Life.

Method

Participants

This cross-sectional quantitative study is descriptive, correlational, and inferential. The sample consisted of two groups: one living in their homeland (the local group) and another having immigrated to Germany as asylum seeker (the asylum seeker group).

Local Group: This group was made of people who lived in the North Western area of Iran, in Gilan region. Inclusion criteria was: to be over 18 years old, to have Persian as their first or second language, to be able to read and understand Persian alphabet very well and to be considered a Muslim (regardless of practicing this religion). We collected data between July 2019 and October 2019.

A total of 200 individuals participated in the study. Eight of them were excluded due to some missing data. The final total sample was made up of 192 participants, 115 female (60%) and 73 male. Age ranged between 18 and 64 years old ($M = 29.10$; $SD = 9.57$).

Asylum Seeker Group: This group was made up of people who had arrived to Berlin (Germany), as asylum seekers within the last 5 years before the time of data collection. They might have already got the refugee status but this was not a requirement for the sample group. Inclusion criteria was: to be over 18 years old, to have Persian (Farsi or Dari) as their first or second language, to be able to read and understand Persian alphabet very well and to be considered a Muslim (regardless of practicing this religion). We collected data between March 2016 and December 2018.

A total of 180 asylum seekers volunteered to participate in the study. Nevertheless, a few of them did not give back the answer sheet ($n = 8$) and some did not complete the questionnaires because they found the questions very difficult to understand ($n = 3$). The final total sample was made up of 169 participants, 72 female (42%) and 88 male. Age ranged between 18 and 61 years old ($M = 29.02$; $SD = 9.90$).

Materials

Sociodemographic Data

Participants filled in the answer sheet containing the following questions: Age (Date of birth and year), Gender (Female or Male), Level of Education (Degree or number of years studied in school) and Marital Status (Single or Married).

Personality Assessment

To measure personality, we used the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1985). This inventory consists of 60 items that assesses five domains (12 items each): Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness to Experience (O), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness (C). Items responses use a five-point Likert scale (from 0 = "I strongly disagree" to 4 = "I strongly agree"). The score of a single subscale can range from 0 to 48.

The internal consistencies reported in the original English manual are: N = .79, E = .79, O = .80, A = .75, C = .83. In our study we used the Persian version translated and standardized by Garousi Farshi (2001) with alpha internal consistencies of N = .86, E = .73, O = .56, A = .68 and C = .87.

In our research, the local sample obtained internal consistencies ranging from O = .51 to N = .78 and for the asylum seeker sample, the internal consistencies ranged from O = .16 to E = .73.

Identity Status Assessment

To measure identity status among participants, we administered the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS-2; Bennion & Adams, 1986). The EOM-EIS-2 is a revised version of the original Objective Measure of Ego Identity Scale developed by Adams et al. (1979). It was designed to measure the four different modes of

Identity Status based on James Marcia's theory: Identity Achievement, Moratorium, Identity Foreclosure, and Identity Diffusion (Marcia, 1966). The EOM-EIS-2 is a self-reported questionnaire with 64 items on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree. Each subscale contains 16 items and its score can range from 16 to 96. Moreover, each status contains eight different areas. Four of these areas are more investigating a person's ideological dimension of life (occupation, religion, political views, and lifestyle philosophy). The other four areas, comprise the interpersonal dimension which provides information concerning friendship, dating, sex role and recreation. The score of each of the four identity statuses (Achievement, Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion) is the sum of the 16 items, two items for each eight areas. The internal consistencies reported by Adams et al. (1979) are as follows: Diffusion ($\alpha = .69$), Moratorium ($\alpha = .66$), Foreclosure ($\alpha = .81$), and Achievement ($\alpha = .76$). These same authors and based on 24 separate studies, also reported alfa internal consistency reliabilities of the four scales ranging from .30 to .89 with a median of .66.

In our research, we used the Iranian version of the EOM-EIS-2 translated by Rahiminezhad and Mansour (2001). In their study with Iranian samples, they obtained a Cronbach alpha value of $\alpha = .76$ for the whole questionnaire and of $\alpha = .59$ to $\alpha = .73$ for ideological scales and of $\alpha = .60$ to $\alpha = .81$ for interpersonal scales.

Dissimilar alpha coefficients have also been reported in different studies in Iran. However, one of the most consistent results comes from a study in Tehran on female students, where the Cronbach alpha for Identity Achievement ($\alpha = .76$), Moratorium ($\alpha = .72$), Identity Foreclosure ($\alpha = .63$), and Identity Diffusion ($\alpha = .71$) were into the medium range, with a mean alfa of .74 (Askarian Moghadam et al., 2013).

In our study, the internal consistencies for the local group were: Identity Achievement ($\alpha = .78$), Identity Moratorium ($\alpha = .67$), Identity Foreclosure ($\alpha = .91$), and Identity Diffusion ($\alpha = .66$); and for the asylum seeker group, the internal consistencies were: Identity

Achievement ($\alpha = .58$), Identity Moratorium ($\alpha = .56$), Identity Foreclosure ($\alpha = .87$), and Identity Diffusion ($\alpha = .50$).

Meaning in Life Assessment

To assess the variable meaning in life, we administered the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ; Steger et al., 2006). This instrument evaluates two dimensions: The Search for Meaning (MLQ-S) measuring engagement and motivation to do efforts to find meaning in life, and the Presence of Meaning (MLQ-P) assessing if life is full of meaning. Both subscales are tested through five items, rated on a seven-point scale from 1 = absolutely untrue to 7 = absolutely true. The score of each subscale can range from 5 to 35. The original English version of the MLQ has shown excellent reliability with alfas ($\alpha = .87$) for the MLQ-S dimension and ($\alpha = .85$) for the MLQ-P dimension, test-retest stability (Steger et al., 2008), stable factor structure, and convergence among informants. The MLQ does not have cut scores and it takes about 3-5 minutes to complete.

Eshtad (2009) translated the MLQ to Persian language and tested its reliability and stability in an Iranian student sample. Alpha coefficients for the MLQ–S dimension was $\alpha = 75$ and for the MLQ–P was $\alpha = .78$. Regarding stability, test-retest correlations after 15 days of administration gave $r = 0.74$ for the MLQ–S dimension and $r = .84$ for the MLQ–P dimension. The reliability reported by Mesrabadi et al. (2013) was $\alpha = .87$ for search for meaning and .86 for presence of meaning.

In our study, the internal consistencies obtained from the local sample were ($\alpha = .81$) for Search for Meaning and ($\alpha = .78$) for Presence of Meaning. Regarding the asylum seeker sample in Germany, the internal consistencies were ($\alpha = .76$) for Search for Meaning and ($\alpha = .84$) for Presence of Meaning.

Purpose in life Assessment

To measure purpose in life, we applied the Purpose in Life test (PIL; Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964). This scale was designed to measure individual's experience of meaning and purpose in life. Although there are three sections of the original, 20-item PIL, only Part A consists of quantifiable information, while Parts B and C consist of sentence completion and paragraph writing, respectively.

Because of the quantifiable nature of Part A, it is therefore the focus of most empirical studies (Crumbaugh & Henrion, 1988; Schulenberg, 2004). For this reason, in our study only Part A has been used. It contains 20 items rated on a seven-point scale and the total score can range from 20 (low purpose) to 140 (high purpose). The PIL has shown an excellent Cronbach alfa of $\alpha = .91$ (Schulenberg, 2004).

The Persian translation by Cheraghi et al. (2009) in a student sample gave a Cronbach alfa of $\alpha = .92$. In our study, the internal consistency obtained from the local sample was $\alpha = .92$ and that from the asylum seeker sample in Germany was $\alpha = .88$.

Procedure

As previously mentioned, this research has been conducted in two different countries and on different communities of the society. Beside all of the difficulties that root from differences in bureaucratic structures of countries, challenges and limitations in access to different communities, political and legal limitations in each country, every other procedure in leading the research was completely the same in both groups, even the level of involvement and accessibility of the researcher in both countries.

Local Group in Iran

Regarding the local group and after passing through the legal steps of getting the permission to administer questionnaires, one university and a cultural educational center in

Langerud (a city in East Gilan, Iran), and two different language schools and one sport/cultural center in Rasht (a city in West Gilan, Iran) accepted to participate in our study.

Through their teachers and myself, we informed potential participants about the study aim. Participants were invited to fill in the questionnaires and we answered the questions raised regarding the research study. We made clear that participation was voluntary, anonymous, and had nothing to do with the university/ academic center's requirements.

Participants answered the battery of questionnaires in group, in classroom settings and in a unique session.

Asylum Seeker Group in Germany

Regarding the group in Germany, we contacted every refugee shelter, counseling and educational centers for refugees in Berlin that we could have the contact information through internet or some connections or advertisements to ask if they would allow us to go there and gather the necessary data for our research.

This stage took a long time to succeed as we had to face plenty of difficulties to get the permission to enter to these institutions. Just to mention some of them: 1) the administrations of the shelters were very sensitive about the possibility that some information about the living conditions in these places could be transferred outside to the general public, 2) the financing organizations were also very sensitive because of the distribution of founding and budget, and 3) protecting ideas of some social workers and administrators about the critical situation of refugees.

After overcoming these difficulties, we got the official permission from two refugee shelters in the East Berlin, one refugee shelter in the West Berlin, one counseling center, one political educational association and two cultural educational centers in the West Berlin.

Potential participants were informed whether directly through the researcher or through their teachers or social workers of the study aim. It was made clear that participation was voluntary, anonymous and had nothing to do with asylum procedures.

Participants answered the battery of questionnaires in group, in classroom settings and in a unique session. All participants received a paper and pencil battery of questionnaires in Farsi language, with the explanation of the research, how to answer the questionnaire, the items and an answering sheet to fill in.

Ethical Standards

All procedures were performed in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki of 1975, as revised in 2013 (World Medical Association, 2013) and with the Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data.

This study also obtained the permission from the Ethics Committee of the Autonomous University of Barcelona. The consent form has been approved and signed by the Ethics Committee for Human and Animal Experimentation (CEEAH) with reference number CEEAH 4929.

All participants were informed about the aim of the study, and filled in and signed the informed consent. Participation was voluntary and not remunerated.

Statistical Analysis

The main variables to study in this research are: Personality, Identity, Meaning in Life, and Purpose in Life.

For clarity purposes, we remind the scales for each of the assessment tools:

Personality Factors (NEO-FFI): Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.

Identity Statuses (EOM-EIS-2): Identity Diffusion, Identity Foreclosure, Moratorium and Identity Achievement.

Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ): Search for Meaning and Presence of Meaning.

Purpose in Life (PIL): Purpose in Life.

The sociodemographic variables gathered in this study (Age, Gender, Years of Education and Civil Status) were used as covariates.

In order to achieve the objectives of this thesis and to test the hypotheses we formulated, we calculated the descriptive statistics of the sociodemographic variables and that of the different scales administered (NEO-FFI, EOM-EIS-2, MLQ and PIL) for both groups, the local and the asylum seeker. We also calculated the normality of these variables and for both groups too by means of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Moreover, we analyzed group differences of the sociodemographic variables using Mann-Whitney U test (Age and Years of Education) and Chi-Square test (Gender and Civil Status). Additionally, in order to check group differences for the four administered questionnaires we did Multivariate Analysis of Variance after controlling for age and gender as both groups differed on these two variables. Finally, in order to analyze the relationship between the questionnaires we administered and have an insight on how they might associate to each other, we conducted Pearson correlation among the scales of these questionnaires for both groups separately.

Furthermore, and exclusively for the asylum seeker group, to determine which personality domain/s from the NEO-FFI and which sociodemographic variable (age, gender, years of education and civil status) explained a given Ego Identity Statuses, a given scale from the Meaning in Life questionnaire and the only scale from the Purpose in Life scale, we performed several multiple linear regression analyses (four for the EOM-EIS-2, two for the MLQ and one for the PIL) using enter method to examine the independent contribution of each personality domain (NEO-FFI) and sociodemographic variables to each of the rest of the

scales administered. All conditions that should be considered in performing multiple linear regression have been met with no collinearity detected.

The statistical analyses were carried out with IBM SPSS Statistics program (IBM Corp., 2020, v.22) and we established bilateral statistical tests assuming an alpha risk of 5%.

Results

In this section, we are going to present the results we achieved through the statistical analysis of the obtained data. We are going to start the presentation by the descriptive statistics, including group differences and correlations among the variables assessed, and we will finish with regression analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

In Table 1, we present descriptive statistics of the sociodemographic variables for the two study groups. As we can see, regarding age, means and ranges in both groups are very similar. But the two groups seem to be different on the other sociodemographic variables assessed. In the local group, there is a higher female percentage, while in the asylum seeker group, males are over represented. At the same time, regarding the variable years of education, the mean in the local group is considerably higher compared to the asylum seeker group and it is more homogeneous. Moreover, the percentage of married people is higher in the asylum seeker group while the percentage of singles is quite similar. Considering the obtained data, the profile of the participant in the local group could be a single woman of about 29 years old with an average level of education of approximately 14 years, while the profile of the participant in the asylum seeker group could be a single man of about 29 years old with an average level of education of approximately 10 years.

Table 1.

Descriptive statistics of the sociodemographic variables for the local and asylum seeker groups.

	Local Group *n* = 192	Asylum Seeker Group *n* = 169
Age		
Mean (*SD*)	29.10 (9.57)	29.02 (9.90)
Range	18 – 64	18 – 61
Gender		
Men (%)	73 (38%)	88 (52%)
Women (%)	115 (60%)	72 (42%)
Years of education		
Mean (*SD*)	14.38 (2.10)	10.30 (4.04)
Range	10 – 22	2 – 18
Civil status		
Married (%)	58 (30%)	68 (40%)
Single (%)	87 (45%)	84 (44%)

Tables 2 to 4 show the descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, alpha coefficients, minimum and maximum values, skewness and kurtosis) of the NEO-FFI, EOM-EIS-2, MLQ and PIL scales, for the local and asylum seeker groups.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the NEO-FFI scales. Focusing on Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained in the local group, unfortunately in Iran there is no result from a general population-based study with the NEO-FFI to be comparable to our results. However, there have been several individual studies in different cities of Iran, mostly done with university students (Joshaghani et al., 2015; Rahmani et al., 2015) and our results are in the same range of those obtained in these resources. Regarding Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained in the asylum seeker group, we did not find any comparable data published in Iran with a population similar to ours.

In the local group, these coefficients ranged from $\alpha = .55$ to $\alpha = .77$, with a mean alpha coefficient of $\alpha = .66$; while in the asylum seeker group they ranged from $\alpha = .27$ to $\alpha =$

.73 with a mean of α = .55. In both samples, the scale with higher reliability coefficient was Conscientiousness and the one with lower reliability was Openness.

The values of these coefficients for the Openness and Agreeableness scales in the asylum group are lower than the accepted range, thus in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the results obtained from the regression analysis with the NEO-FFI variables, we did not consider these two variables for these analyses.

Table 2.

Descriptive statistics, alpha coefficients, minimum and maximum values, skewness and kurtosis of the NEO-FFI scales for the local (n = 192) and asylum seeker (n = 169) groups.

NEO-FFI	*M*	*SD*	α	Minimum-Maximum values	Skewness	Kurtosis
Neuroticism						
Local group	24.04	7.94	.73	3 – 42	0.20	-0.27
Asylum Seeker group	23.96	6.62	.62	7 – 37	-0.06	-0.72
Extraversion						
Local group	29.29	6.22	.68	8 – 43	0.66	0.49
Asylum Seeker group	27.67	7.39	.73	2 – 43	-0.46	0.21
Openness						
Local group	26.8	5.35	.55	12 – 42	0.21	0.16
Asylum Seeker group	25.16	4.47	.27	16 – 38	0.30	0.20
Agreeableness						
Local group	35.02	5.45	.56	9 – 42	-0.29	0.34
Asylum Seeker group	27.29	4.73	.43	17 – 42	0.42	0.60
Conscientiousness						
Local group	35.02	6.26	.77	14 – 48	-0.43	-0.40
Asylum Seeker group	35.79	5.92	.72	18 – 48	-0.64	0.25

Note. NEO-FFI = Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Five-Factor Inventory

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status scales for the local and asylum seeker groups. Interestingly, the obtained results of

identity statuses in the two samples are very similar to each other. Regarding Cronbach's

alpha coefficients obtained in the local group, these coefficients ranged from α = .66 to α =

.91, with a mean alpha coefficient of α = .76; while in the asylum seeker group they ranged

from α = .50 to α = .87 with a mean of α = .63. In both samples, the scale with higher

reliability coefficient was Identity Foreclosure and the one with lower reliability was Identity

Diffusion.

Table 3.

Descriptive statistics, alpha coefficients, minimum and maximum values, skewness and kurtosis of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status scales for the local (n = 192) and asylum seeker (n = 169) groups.

EOM-EIS-2	M	SD	α	Minimum-Maximum values	Skewness	Kurtosis
Identity Achievement						
Local group	66.40	9.30	.78	44 – 93	0.62	0.27
Asylum Seeker group	65.42	8.58	.58	36 – 90	-0.14	1.42
Identity Moratorium						
Local group	58.78	8.23	.67	37 – 83	0.23	0.47
Asylum Seeker group	60.09	7.92	.56	36 – 89	0.21	1.79
Identity Foreclosure						
Local group	45.05	13.83	.91	16 – 88	0.02	-0.13
Asylum Seeker group	46.64	14.05	.87	16 – 94	0.14	0.51
Identity Diffusion						
Local group	52.35	8.74	.66	30 – 80	0.23	0.58
Asylum Seeker group	53.64	7.96	.50	26 – 79	-0.28	1.34

Note: EOM-EIS-2 = Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status.

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire and Purpose in Life scale for the local and asylum seeker groups. Interestingly, the obtained results of the two questionnaires in the two samples are very similar to each other. The means and standard deviations for both groups are very similar, and also close to comparable studies performed in Iran on the age range of 20 to 30 years old (Joshaghani et al., 2015; Rahmani et al., 2015).

Regarding MLQ Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained in the local group, the coefficients were $\alpha = .81$ and $\alpha = .78$ for the Search for Meaning and Presence of Meaning scales respectively. For the asylum seeker group, the alphas were $\alpha = .76$ and $\alpha = .84$ for the two scales respectively. Both scales showed a similar pattern of internal consistency in both samples. Regarding PIL Cronbach's alpha coefficients they were very similar for both groups.

Summing up and regarding internal consistencies of the EOM-EIS-2, MLQ and PIL questionnaires, in general the alphas were always higher in the local group and comparable to other similar Iranian samples.

Table 4.

Descriptive statistics, alpha coefficients, minimum and maximum values, skewness and kurtosis of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire and Purpose in Life scale for the local (n = 192) and asylum seeker (n = 169) groups.

MLQ	*M*	*SD*	*α*	Minimum-Maximum values	Skewness	Kurtosis
Search for Meaning						
Local group	27.62	6.29	.81	5 – 35	-1.15	1.23
Asylum Seeker group	26.39	6.11	.76	5 – 35	-0.82	1.07
Presence of Meaning						
Local group	26.13	6.00	.78	6 – 35	-0.67	0.38
Asylum Seeker group	27.88	6.16	.84	5 – 35	-1.07	0.93
PIL						
Purpose in life						
Local group	96.27	21.26	.92	36 – 140	-0.38	-0.01
Asylum Seeker group	96.63	19.47	.88	34 – 134	-0.80	0.75

Notes: MLQ = Meaning in Life Questionnaire; PIL = Purpose in Life.

Normality of the Data Distribution

Tables 5 to 8 show the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test for age and years of education and for NEO-FFI, EOM-EIS-2, MLQ and PIL questionnaires for both samples. According to the outcomes from Table 5, age and years of education for both samples do not follow a normal distribution.

Table 5.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for age and years of education for both groups.

Variables	Local Group (n = 192)			Asylum Seeker Group (n = 169)		
	Statistic	df	p	Statistic	df	p
Age	.135	134	< .001	.135	135	< .001
Years of education	.203	134	< .001	.181	135	< .001

According to the results shown in Table 6, the distribution of Openness and Agreeableness in the local group, and the distribution of Neuroticism and Extraversion in the asylum seeker group are normal. The remaining variables in each group do not follow a normal distribution.

Moreover, and based on the data exhibited in Table 7, only the data distribution of Identity Foreclosure, in the local group, is normal and the rest of the variables in both groups do not follow a normal distribution.

Table 6.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the NEO-FFI scales for both groups.

NEO-FFI	Local Group (n = 192)			Asylum Seeker Group (n = 169)		
	Statistic	df	p	Statistic	df	p
Neuroticism	.084	134	.021	.055	135	.200
Extraversion	.113	134	< .001	.071	135	.088
Openness	.069	134	.200	.106	135	.001
Agreeableness	.064	134	.200	.091	135	.009
Conscientiousness	.084	134	.022	.110	135	< .001

Note. NEO-FFI = Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Five-Factor Inventory.

Table 7.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the EOM-EIS-2 scales for both groups.

EOM-EIS-2	Local Group (*n* = 192)			Asylum Seeker Group (*n* = 169)		
	Statistic	*df*	*p*	Statistic	*df*	*p*
Identity Achievement	.095	134	.005	.088	135	.013
Identity Moratorium	.083	134	.026	.125	135	< .001
Identity Foreclosure	.065	134	.200	.106	135	.001
Identity Diffusion	.079	134	.039	.083	135	.025

Note: EOM-EIS-2 = Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status.

Finally, regarding MLQ and PIL, Table 8 indicates that the only variable that follows a normal distribution is Purpose in Life in the local group. The remaining variables in both groups do not follow a normal distribution.

Table 8.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for MLQ and PIL scales for both groups.

MQL	Local Group (*n* = 192)			Asylum Seeker Group (*n* = 169)		
	Statistic	*df*	*p*	Statistic	*df*	*p*
Search for Meaning	.134	134	< .001	.090	135	.010
Presence of Meaning	.082	134	.026	.162	135	< .001
PIL	.060	134	.200	.092	135	.007

Note: MLQ = Meaning in Life Questionnaire; PIL = Purpose in Life.

Group comparisons on sociodemographic and NEO-FFI, EOM-EIS-2, MLQ and PIL

variables

Tables 9 to 14 show the differences between the two groups on the sociodemographic variables and the rest of the questionnaires assessed.

According to the results presented in Table 9, both groups statistically do not differ significantly in age but they do differ in years of education. The local group has a significantly higher level of education with a mean difference of four points.

Table 9.

Mann-Whitney U Test group differences for age and years of education.

	Local Group	Asylum Seeker Groups			
	(*n* = 192)	(*n* = 169)			
	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	U	*z*	*p*
Age	159.16	152.56	11557	-0.647	.518
Years of education	204.08	110.65	5350	-9.194	<.001

Table 10 shows group differences regarding gender and civil status. Both groups do significantly differ in the percentage of gender being represented in each group. While in the local group women are over represented, in the asylum seeker group men are. Regarding civil status, both groups do not differ significantly in the percentage of being married or single.

Table 10.

Chi-Square results for Gender and Civil Status for the local (n = 192) *and asylum seeker (n = 169) groups.*

	$\chi 2$	*df*	*p*
Gender	9.091	1	.003
Civil Status	0.682	1	.409

In order to check if the local group and the asylum seeker group are significantly different in their personality profile, we conducted between-subject analyses. Table 11 shows the results obtained for the NEO-FFI inventory after controlling for age and gender. We controlled for these two variables because when assessing personality, we have to take them into account as we have different norms for gender and age. Regarding the obtained results, we can see that both groups do not differ on any of the three personality variables assessed. Openness and Agreeableness were not included in this analysis because of their low internal consistency.

Table 11.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance between both groups of the NEO-FFI scales after controlling for age and gender.

NEO – FFI	F	p	ηp^2
Neuroticism	0.004	.949	.000
Extraversion	2.729	.100	.009
Conscientiousness	2.992	.085	.010

Note: NEO-FFI = Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Five-Factor Inventory.

Table 12 shows the results of comparing the four identity statuses assessed by the EOM-EIS-2 in the two groups. In conducting this analysis, we have controlled for gender and years of education as both groups significantly differ on these two sociodemographic variables. Based on the final outcomes, both groups significantly differ only in the Identity Foreclosure scale, being the asylum seeker group the one that exhibited higher scores in this status. The effect size is low to moderate ($\eta p^2 = .018$).

Table 12.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance between both groups of the EOM-EIS-2 scales after controlling for gender and years of education.

EOM-EIS-2	F	p	ηp^2
Identity Achievement	0.032	.857	.000
Identity Moratorium	0.693	.406	.002
Identity Foreclosure	5.610	.018	.018
Identity Diffusion	0.013	.911	.000

Note: EOM-EIS-2 = Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status.

Tables 13 and 14 show group comparisons for the MLQ and PIL questionnaires respectively after controlling for gender and years of education. Regarding the MLQ (Table 13), both groups significantly differed on both scales of this questionnaire. While the local group scored significantly higher in Search for Meaning, the asylum seeker group scored significantly higher in the Presence of Meaning scale. The effect sizes for both scales were low ($\eta p^2 = .025$) to moderate ($\eta p^2 = .059$) respectively. Regarding the PIL scale (Table 14), there is no significant difference between both groups in Purpose in Life.

Table 13.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance between both groups of the MLQ scales after controlling for gender and years of education.

MLQ	F	p	ηp^2
Search for Meaning	7.760	.006	.025
Presence of Meaning	19.279	.000	.059

Note: MLQ = Meaning in Life Questionnaire.

Table 14.

Univariate Analysis of Variance between both groups of the PIL scale after controlling for gender and years of education.

PIL	*F*	*p*	ηp^2
Purpose in Life	2.868	.091	.009

Note: PIL = Purpose in Life.

Correlations among the different scales administered (NEO-FFI, EOM-EIS-2, MLQ and PIL) for both groups

In order to analyze the relationship between the questionnaires we administered and have an insight on how they might associate to each other, we conducted Pearson correlation among the scales of these questionnaires for both groups separately. The results are presented in Tables 15 and 16.

Table 15 shows the coefficients of correlation in the local group. Regarding the pattern of correlations between identity statuses (EOM-EIS-2) and personality factors (NEO-FFI) we can state that Identity Achievement correlates positive and significantly with Extraversion and Conscientiousness. Moratorium only correlates significant and positively with Neuroticism, while Identity Foreclosure with Extraversion. Regarding Identity Diffusion it significantly correlates with the three scales, namely Neuroticism, Extraversion and Conscientiousness.

In relation to the correlations between MLQ scales and personality factors, the Search for meaning scale do not correlate with any of the NEO-FF scales, while Presence of meaning correlates significantly with the three personality factors. Finally, Purpose in life also significantly correlates with the three personality scales, positively with E and C and negatively with N.

Regarding the pattern of correlations between Meaning in Life (MLQ) and identity statuses (EOM-EIS-2) we can state that the Search for meaning scale correlates significantly only with Identity moratorium, while Presence of meaning significantly correlates with Achievement and Diffusion, positive and negative respectively. Concerning the correlation between MLQ and PIL, only the Presence of meaning scale correlated significantly with Purpose in life. Finally, Purpose in life, correlated significative and negatively with Identity moratorium and Identity diffusion scales from the EOM-EIS-2 questionnaire.

Summing up and for research purposes, Table 15 indicates that the PIL scale significantly correlates with the three personality scales, with the Presence of meaning scale and with the moratorium and diffusion identities.

Table 15.

Correlations among the different scales administered (EOM-EIS-2, PIL, MLQ and NEO-FFI) for the local group (n = 192).

	EOM-EIS-2				PIL	MLQ	
	Identity Achievement	Identity Moratorium	Identity Foreclosure	Identity Diffusion	Purpose in Life	Search for Meaning	Presence of Meaning
NEO-FFI							
N	- .036	.337**	.021	.286**	-.406**	.139	-.318**
E	.274**	.009	.206*	-.220*	.456**	.173	.501**
C	.361**	-.046	.063	-.296**	.328**	.096	.505**
MLQ							
Search for Meaning	.122	.297**	.003	-.024	.108		
Presence of Meaning	.325**	-.094	.150	-.327**	.594**		
PIL							
Purpose in Life	.091	-.260**	-.073	-.340**			

Note. EOM-EIS-2 = Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status; PIL = Purpose in Life; MLQ = Meaning in Life Questionnaire; NEO-FFI = Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Five-Factor Inventory.

*p ≤ .01, **p ≤ .001

Table 16 shows the coefficients of correlation for the asylum seeker group. Regarding the pattern of correlations between identity statuses (EOM-EIS-2) and personality factors (NEO-FFI) we can state that Identity achievement correlates positive and significantly with Extraversion and Conscientiousness, and Identity moratorium and Foreclosure both correlate positive and significantly with Neuroticism. Identity Diffusion do not correlate with any of the studied personality factors. In relation to the correlation between MLQ and NEO-FFI, Search for Meaning scale is only significantly correlated with Neuroticism which is a positive association, while Presence of meaning has a significant and negative correlation with Neuroticism and a positive correlation with E and C. Finally, Purpose in life scale significantly correlates with N, E and C.

Regarding the pattern of correlations between Meaning in Life (MLQ) and identity statuses (EOM-EIS-2) we can state that the Search for meaning scale correlates significantly and positively with Identity moratorium and diffusion, while Presence of meaning significantly correlates with Identity Achievement, Foreclosure and Diffusion, positively with the first one and negatively with the other two. Concerning the correlation between MLQ and PIL, only the Presence of meaning scale is significantly and positively correlated with Purpose in life. Finally, Purpose in life, only correlated significantly and positively with Identity achievement from the EOM-EIS-2 questionnaire.

Summing up and for research purposes, Table 16 indicates that the PIL scale significantly correlates with the three personality scales, with the Presence of meaning scale and with the Identity achievement scale.

Table 16.

Correlations among the different scales administered (EOM-EIS-2, PIL, MLQ and NEO-FFI)
for the asylum seeker group (n =192).

	EOM-EIS-2				PIL	MLQ	
	Identity Achievement	Identity Moratorium	Identity Foreclosure	Identity Diffusion	Purpose in Life	Search for Meaning	Presence of Meaning
NEO-FFI							
N	-.087	.240*	.299**	.159	-.454**	.294**	-.431**
E	.322**	.132	-.116	-.011	.434**	.028	.388**
C	.412**	.104	-.101	-.061	.294**	.040	.426**
MLQ							
Search for Meaning	.120	.346**	.019	.216*	-.051		
Presence of Meaning	.309**	-.077	-.275**	-.232*	.521**		
PIL							
Purpose in Life	.370**	-.008	-.108	-.135			

Notes. EOM-EIS-2= Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status; PIL = Purpose in
Life; MLQ = Meaning in Life Questionnaire; NEO-FFI = Neuroticism-Extraversion-
Openness Five-Factor Inventory.

$*p \leq .01$, $**p \leq .001$

Inferential Statistics: Multiple Lineal Regression

For the purpose of our study and in order to check which variables had significant effect on other variables of interest and specifically in the asylum seeker group, we performed several multiple lineal regression analyses. Table 17 illustrates the models obtained for the NEO-FFI scales and the sociodemographic variables contributing to the four identity statuses assessed by the EOM-EIS-2, while Table 18 shows the models obtained for NEO-FFI scales and sociodemographic variables contributing to the Meaning in Life and Purpose in Life variables. Finally, Table 19 illustrates the models obtained for MLQ and PIL and sociodemographic variables respectively contributing to the four identity statuses assessed by the EOM-EIS-2.

To examine if NEO-FFI personality factors together with sociodemographic variables had significant effects on the four EOM-EIS-2 identity statuses, we performed four multiple linear regression analyses, one for each identity statuses (see Table 17). In each regression, any of the four identity statuses acted as the dependent variable, and the personality factors and sociodemographic variables acted as the independent ones.

Regarding Identity diffusion, the investigated model indicates that Neuroticism and Extraversion are the personality variables that have a significant contribution on this identity status. At the same time, none of the sociodemographic variables considered in the model were a significant predictor of this identity status. The findings point out that having higher scores on Neuroticism and Extraversion might be risk factors indicative of displaying identity diffusion. However, we should also consider that the variables included in this model scarcely explained 4.6% of the variability.

Concerning Identity foreclosure, the studied model specifies that Neuroticism is the only personality variable which could predict positively this identity status and that the remaining personality variables have no significant contribution. At the same time, age, gender and years of education were significant and negative predictors of identity

foreclosure. The obtained data for personality and sociodemographic variables indicate that having higher scores on Neuroticism, younger age, being female and having lower levels of education are risk factors for exhibiting identity foreclosure. The variables included in this model explain 25.3% of the variability.

About Identity moratorium, the considered model illustrates that Neuroticism and Extraversion both are positive predictors of moratorium. Moreover, gender is the only sociodemographic variable with a significant and negative contribution to this identity status. The findings indicated that having high scores on Neuroticism and Extraversion, and being female, are explanatory factors for displaying identity moratorium. The variables included in this model explain 14.8% of the variability.

Finally, regarding identity achievement and based on the assumed model, the three personality variables included in the model had a significant and positive effect on this identity status. Nevertheless, none of the sociodemographic variables had a significant contribution on this identity status. The variables included in this model explain 19.2% of the variability.

Summarizing, the four regression models shown in Table 17 indicate that Neuroticism contributes to all identity statuses, Extraversion to moratorium, achievement and diffusion, and Conscientiousness only to identity achievement. Concerning sociodemographic variables, age and years of education only contribute to identity foreclosure while gender contributes to moratorium and foreclosure identity statuses. The variable civil status does not contribute to any of the identity statuses assessed.

Table 17.

Standardized beta regression coefficients. Association between NEO-FFI scales and sociodemographic variables with the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status scales for the asylum seeker group (*n* = 169).

	Identity Diffusion	Identity Foreclosure	Identity Moratorium	Identity Achievement
Neuroticism	.243*	.281**	.366***	.190*
Extraversion	.207*	.013	.329***	.242**
Conscientiousness	.010	.046	.094	.328***
Age	- .019	- .216*	- .141	- .012
Gender	.029	- .182*	- .186*	- .097
Years of education	- .180	- .270**	- .037	.080
Civil status	.043	.106	.120	.131
R^2	4.6%	25.3%	14.8%	19.2%

Note. NEO-FFI = Neuroticism-Extraversion-Openness Five-Factor Inventory. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Following the same rationale and to examine if NEO-FFI personality factors together with sociodemographic variables had significant effects on the scales of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire and on the Purpose in Life scale, we performed three different multiple linear regression analyses, two for the MLQ and one for the PIL (see Table 18). Search for meaning, Presence of meaning, and Purpose in Life acted as the dependent variables in the three different regressions and personality factors and sociodemographic variables as the independent ones.

Regarding the MLQ and specifically the Search for meaning scale, the assumed model indicates that Neuroticism is the only personality variable which predicts this variable positively and the remaining personality variables have no significant contribution. At the same time, years of education is the only sociodemographic variable with significant and negative contribution to search for meaning. The obtained data for personality and

sociodemographic variables indicates that having higher scores on Neuroticism, and having lower levels of education are explanatory factors for exhibiting search for meaning. The variables included in this model explain 16.5% of the variability.

Concerning Presence of meaning, the considered model shows that Conscientiousness is the only personality factor that has a significant and positive effect on it. At the same time, years of education is the only sociodemographic variable that has a significant and positive contribution to it. The findings indicated that having high scores on Conscientiousness and higher levels of education, are explanatory factors for presence of meaning in life. The percentage of variation in presence of meaning that can be accredited to the introduced independent variables in this model is 27.9%.

Finally, regarding purpose in life and based on the studied model, Neuroticism has a significant and negative contribution, while Extraversion contributed significantly and positive to it. None of the sociodemographic variables considered in the model have significant contribution to purpose in life. The variables included in this model explain 18.2% of the variability.

Summarizing, the three different regression models shown in Table 18 indicate that regarding MLQ, while Neuroticism is a predictor for search for meaning, Conscientiousness is a predictor of presence of meaning. Years of education is a predictor of both, search and presence of meaning. Regarding PIL, only Neuroticism and Extraversion are predictors of purpose in life, although Extraversion to a lesser extent. No one of the sociodemographic variables introduced contributed to Purpose in life.

Table 18.

Standardized beta regression coefficients. Association between NEO-FFI scales and sociodemographic variables with Meaning in Life Questionnaire and Purpose in Life scale for the asylum seeker group (n = 169).

	MLQ		PIL
	Search for Meaning	Presence of Meaning	Purpose in Life
Neuroticism	.316***	-.110	-.297***
Extraversion	.174	.162	.188*
Conscientiousness	.098	.256**	.048
Age	.145	.046	.168
Gender	.001	-.112	-.040
Years of Education	-.351***	.246**	-.037
Civil Status	-.085	.062	-.045
R^2	16.5%	27.9%	18.2%

Notes: NEO-FFI = NEO Five-Factor Inventory; MLQ = Meaning in Life Questionnaire; PIL = Purpose in Life. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Finally, following the same rationale and to examine if EOM-EIS-2 identity statuses together with sociodemographic variables had significant effects on the scales of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire and on the Purpose in Life scale, we performed three different multiple linear regression analyses, two for the MLQ and one for the PIL (see Table 19). Search for meaning, Presence of meaning, and Purpose in Life acted as the dependent variables in three different regressions and identity statuses and sociodemographic variables as the independent ones.

Regarding the MLQ and specifically the Search for meaning scale, the assumed model indicates that Moratorium is the only identity status positively and significant predicting search for meaning. Years of education is the only sociodemographic variable with significant and negative contribution to search for meaning. The obtained model indicates that having higher scores on identity moratorium and lower levels of education are

explanatory factors for exhibiting search for meaning. The variables included in this model explain 16.4% of the variability.

Concerning presence of meaning, the considered model indicates that Identity Achievement has a significant and positive effect, while Identity Diffusion and Identity Foreclosure have a negative and significant contribution. None of the sociodemographic variables introduced in the model had a significant contribution to presence of meaning. The findings indicated that having identity achievement and low diffusion and foreclosure are predictors of having presence of meaning in life. The percentage of variation explained by this model is 25.8%.

Finally, regarding purpose in life, identity achievement is the only identity status with significant and positive contribution to it. None of the sociodemographic variables introduced in the model had a significant contribution to purpose in life. The proportion of variation that can be attributed to identity achievement to contributing to purpose in life is 14.4%.

To summarize, regarding MLQ, only identity moratorium contributed to search for meaning while the rest of statuses contributed to presence of meaning. Years of education only contributed to search for meaning. Regarding PIL, only identity achievement contributed to this variable.

Table 19.

Standardized beta regression coefficients. Association between the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status scales and sociodemographic variables with Meaning in Life Questionnaire and Purpose in Life scale for the asylum seeker group (n = 169).

	MLQ		PIL
	Search for Meaning	Presence of Meaning	Purpose in Life
Identity Diffusion	-.083	-.192*	-.175
Identity Foreclosure	-.176	-.222*	-.078
Identity Moratorium	.272**	.038	-.029
Identity Achievement	.127	.293***	.389***
Age	.160	.028	.150
Gender	.032	-.092	-.002
Years of Education	-.456***	.144	-.062
Civil Status	-.143	.109	-.032
R^2	16.4%	25.8%	14.4%

Notes: MLQ = Meaning in Life Questionnaire; PIL = Purpose in Life. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion

The main purpose of this thesis was to study personality factors, identity statuses, meaning and purpose in life in a group of asylum seekers in Germany. Furthermore, we also aimed at investigating the contribution of these personality factors to identity statuses, meaning and purpose in life, and finally the contribution of identity statuses to the meaning and purpose in life.

After administrating the questionnaires and analyzing the obtained data, our results lead us to confirm or reject the hypotheses.

HYPOTHESIS 1. The local group and the asylum seeker group would significantly differ in their identity status, meaning and purpose in life, and personality profile.

Based on the obtained data and regarding personality factors, both groups do not significantly differ on Neuroticism, Extraversion and Conscientiousness. Regarding identity statuses, they only differ on identity foreclosure. Finally, regarding meaning in life and purpose in life, they vary on meaning but not on purpose in life. Consequently, we can conclude that this hypothesis is partially confirmed.

Concerning personality, we can affirm both groups have similar and comparable personality profiles. Reviewing the literature on this topic, we did not find another study comparing the personality profiles of asylum seekers or refugees with the people living in the original country. However, based on the literature on associations between coping strategies and personality factors (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Gomà-i-Freixanet et al., 2021) and those that predict the role of personality factors on the environmental engagement (Milfont & Sibley, 2012), we assumed and looked for some differences in personality factors that could help us understand the underlying reasons why asylum seekers flee their home country along with environmental, security and safety reasons like war or civil war like in Afghanistan. However, our results are in line with different studies that show that personality factors

assessed through the NEO are transculturally and are not affected by culture (McCrae et al., 2004; Terracciano & McCrae, 2006). On the other hand, the similarity in the personality profile in both groups probably points out the fact that personality traits are not the ones that assist people to decide to migrate and seek asylum in a foreign country. Other variables apart from personality traits are probably the ones that make people migrate.

Regarding identity statuses, we did not find any study comparing asylum seekers or refugees with people in their native country, however, there are many studies suggesting the development of an identity crisis as a common experience among asylum seekers and refugees (e.g., Berry et. al., 2006; Ward et al., 2021). Our findings indicating no significant differences between two groups on identity diffusion might be explained by, individuals experiencing an identity crisis might be in the process of developing a healthy identity, although they might linger in one of the identity statuses for a while before exhibiting identity achievement, or not at all.

However, we did find significantly higher scores in the asylum seekers group on identity foreclosure. First, we can illustrate them based on findings of Marcia (1966, 2002), which indicates the higher vulnerability of self-esteem of the people with foreclosure identity to the negative information and their poor performance on a stressful concept-attainment task. Moreover, adopting an unrealistic perspective to unattainable high goals, rather than moderating towards the realistic achievable goals could also explain the motivation of some asylum seekers for leaving their countries because of the available stress factors. Secondly, what stands out based on these findings is that there is no significant difference between the two groups on identity diffusion, and, at the same time, based on varied research and literature most asylum seekers experience a phase of identity crisis (Bulgin, 2018; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000; Wehrle et al., 2018). We observe a significantly higher expression of identity foreclosure as a defense mechanism to feel more secure in facing questions on their identity. The third explanation could come from the fact that most asylum

seekers (as well as the ones that participated in our study) live in refugee shelters for the first years of their residency in Germany, where they are more adversely affected by the social pressure from their ethnical communities, even compared to the time they lived in the original country, feeling less free to choose and act based on self-explored ideas and beliefs. A research project by Koburtay et al. (2020) on the role of cultural pressures and group favoritism in shaping Syrian refugees' identity in the Jordanian work environment, studied the same social pressure from another perspective and its findings are in line with this interpretation.

Considering the results showing no significant differences between the two groups on moratorium and identity achievement, and taking into account the theory of Erikson (1963), and Marcia (1966, 2002), it is very reasonable that identity achievement or moratorium are something that one can experience in different life circumstances. Although being an asylum seeker in a new country is already a big challenge for the identity as asylum seekers lose a lot of roles or possibilities that they had in their own country. On the other hand, the presence of so many supporting systems, integration programs, social activities, specifically provided for asylum seekers could provide new roles and possibilities for many of them, especially for women who had many limitations and pressures for accepting a traditional role in the country of origin.

Finally, regarding meaning in life and purpose in life, we did not find any study that compares asylum seekers or refugees with the people in the original country based on their meaning or purpose in life, but there are some reports on feeling empty, lack of meaning, or motivation among refugees (Cascade Behavioral Health Hospital, 2019; Covenant Counseling, 2021; Peterson, 2021; Refugeeum, 2016; Tull & Block, 2020). Our findings indicating that the locals scored higher on search for meaning while asylum seekers scored higher on presence of meaning, could be explained by referring to the theory of Frankl (2000) suggesting that challenges and difficulties of life can, at the same time, provide us with the

new sources of meaning when we feel responsible about them. Through our practical experiences, we could also see that living in a very new situation which demands lots of explorations, everyday challenges of integrating into a new culture, society, etc., could already be a source of meaning for a big group of asylum seekers, even so that they might find more meaning in the life than local people living in their own society with everyday routines and familiar challenges. Moreover, trying to be able to stablish a new life as dreamed or expected successfully might give reasons to people to find their life meaningful. Finally, although our practical experiences also indicate that many asylum seekers suffer from lack of meaning in life in the new situation, we should not forget that, not only do many other asylum seekers do not lose the sense of meaning in life, but rather find new meanings in their life (Cleland et al., 2002).

Considering the results that show no significant difference in purpose in life between the two groups, might also indicate that, in general, immigrating and living in a new country as an asylum seeker does not necessarily mean that this person has less or more purpose in their life compared to a person who is living in their own country.

After all, we should also consider that most of our research participants were the ones whom we approached in cultural and counseling centers, and even those who were participating in the asylum shelters were mostly people who already had active participations in events or social activities. It is very understandable that people who feel lost, people with identity diffusion or those who find their lives meaningless are less likely to participate in a study which has no reward or advantage for them. This might also be the main reason in not seeing a difference on identity diffusion or for having higher levels of presence of meaning among asylum seekers.

HYPOTHESIS 2. In the asylum seeker group, Neuroticism would positively predict and Conscientiousness would negatively predict Identity Diffusion.

Regarding Hypothesis 2, the obtained data shows that it is partially confirmed. Our results indicate that N and E positively predict identity diffusion, while C and the rest of the sociodemographic variables introduced to the model do not have any contribution to this identity status. This indicates that asylum seekers with higher levels of neuroticism and extraversion would likely exhibit higher levels of identity diffusion.

In the literature reviewed, we did not find similar studies exploring the relationship between personality and identity statuses neither applying the same questionnaires to measure these variables. Thus, we will mention similar and relevant findings.

Our results indicating that Neuroticism is a positive predictor of identity diffusion are similar to previous results obtained by Hosseininasab et al. (2009) in Iran, where they found a positive association between these two variables. Other authors (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993) also found a positive association between Neuroticism and identity diffusion; however, this study also revealed an inverse correlation between Conscientiousness and identity diffusion. Moreover, a study by Dollinger (1995) using the Identity Style Inventory (Berzonsky, 1989) found that the diffused/avoidant style from this inventory was positively related to Neuroticism, but negatively to Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. We did not find any study regarding the association between Extraversion and identity diffusion. Due to the scarcity of published literature on this topic, we cannot go further on the discussion basing ourselves on the literature regarding the relationship between personality and identity diffusion.

Despite this and from the theoretical point of view, it seems that identity diffusion is positively predicted by neuroticism and extraversion. According to Costa and McCrae (1992b), a person with high neuroticism is more likely concentrating or insisting on the negative aspects of a condition or an option, rather than the positive ones, consequently when

facing challenges to achieve certain goals they might be more irritated and annoyed as they experience higher levels of stress and anxiety and, as a result, they are prone to give up. Our practical experiences with asylum seekers, also approve this connection, especially in the first years of their lives in the host country, when they face new and unknown challenges to deal with.

Regarding those scoring higher on Extraversion, we can define them as being involved in different social events and occasions without having a certain level of concentration and planification, which could cause them more confusion rather than easing stability in the process of achieving a healthy identity. Adding to this situation, a high need for joining groups, attending social events or activities, could distract the person and not facilitate the process of identity construction or reconstruction. Moreover, according to Marcia (1966, 2002), a person with identity diffusion, is the one that has not really explored the different possibilities and is not clearly committed to a given identity status. The process to reach an adequate identity status needs staying focused and working for the demands and requirements, as well as not easily getting distracted or giving up the tasks due to the stress or anxiety. Unfortunately, these characteristics are the ones not easily found among people with high scores on N and E. Our experiences with asylum seekers also show that many asylum seekers who are often involved in different social events and activities have no conscious plan to find their interests or goals for personal development but rather they distract themselves or protect themselves against sorrows or stresses.

Unfortunately, and contradicting our assumption, Conscientiousness is not a negative predictor of identity diffusion. According to Costa and McCrae (1992b), a person high on C is hard working, committed, and organized. However, based on our results it seems that high Conscientiousness does not decrease the possibility for identity diffusion. Our experiences also show that many asylum seekers who seem to be still confused about what they want to

be or to do, and have no clear goals and plans for the future, were very active, engaged and hard working in the country of origin.

HYPOTHESIS 3. In the asylum seeker group, Agreeableness would positively predict and Openness would negatively predict Identity Foreclosure.

Regarding Hypothesis 3, unfortunately we could not confirm neither reject it, as the variables A and O did obtain a very low internal consistency which prevented us from using in the subsequent statistical analyses. However, we examined the effect of the N, E and C, and the sociodemographic variables on identity foreclosure to find out any contribution not been considered in the hypotheses.

Our findings based on the regression analysis indicate that Neuroticism is a positive predicting factor for Identity Foreclosure, whereas E and C do not yield a unique contribution. Regarding sociodemographic variables, years of education had the largest contribution followed by age and gender to Identity Foreclosure in a negative direction. These results indicate that exhibiting higher levels of N, having lower levels of education, younger age, and being a female are risk factors for experiencing identity foreclosure among asylum seekers. This means that female asylum seekers, who are younger, have lower levels of education and experience higher levels of neuroticism are more likely experiencing or taking a foreclosure identity status. Consequently, a person with this profile is likely to exhibit a higher possibility for foreclosure identity.

Reviewing the available literature, we did not find any research with similar focus on the variables we have studied, and all we found have studied the association between these variables rather than the prediction. We can refer to these other studies to have some insight about other connections between these variables, although they are obtained in very different study groups.

Our results indicating on the positive effect of Neuroticism on identity foreclosure are not in the same line with the outcomes obtained in the research by Clancy and Dollinger (1993). Applying similar questionnaires to the ones in our study, they found a negative association between foreclosure and O among young adults. Two other Iranian studies (Hosseininasab et al., 2009; Nedaeifar et al., 2019) did not find similar results to ours, indicating an association between identity foreclosure and Openness (positive in the first study and negative in the second) and a positive association between identity foreclosure and agreeableness (second study) but there is no indication of the relationship between identity foreclosure and neuroticism. Moreover, in the research of Dollinger (1995) administrating the Identity Style Inventory (Berzonsky, 1989), the normative identity style scale (the identity matching foreclosure) was positively correlated to E, A and C, but not to Neuroticism. Considering the mentioned findings and the fact that in our study there is a positive correlation between N and identity foreclosure for the asylum seekers group but not in the local group, we can assume that this connection might be something linked to being an asylum seeker.

Considering the negative effect of gender on the likelihood of being in identity foreclosure status, we can relate our results to those of Archer (1989) in a suburban community in New Jersey with school students of grade 6 to 12, where boys showed significantly higher identity foreclosure and females showed higher identity diffusion in the area of political ideology. However, both genders used the identity process similarly in the domains of vocational choice, religious beliefs, and sex-role orientation. Girls were significantly more likely to be in moratorium or identity achievement with regard to family roles. On the other hand, the positive effect of being a girl on identity foreclosure based on our results is in line with the findings of Bahadori and Aliloo (2012) among Iranian students where Identity Foreclosure was significantly more exhibited among female students compared to male students. We can estimate that the differences in the results by Archer

(1989) and our results are very likely coming from the differences in the research samples based on cultural and age differences.

Regarding the contribution of age to the identity foreclosure, we can compare our study with the study by Fadjukoff et al. (2016) in which across various domains, identity foreclosure peaked at age 36, as compared to ages 27 and 42, whereas identity achievement generally increased between the ages of 36 and 42. The authors reported a big variability across the identity domains at each age level.

Our results indicating the negative effect of the age and level of education is at the same time in line with the results of another study by Al-zoubi (2020) with university students in Balqa'a (Jordan), that showed that the exhibition of identity foreclosure is significantly higher among first-year compared to fourth-year students. The same way, identity diffusion is significantly higher among first year compared to the third and fourth-year students. These differences between first- and fourth-year students can be attributed to the differences on the education level between them and is interestingly in the same direction with our findings.

Due to the lack of published literature on the relationship between personality and identity diffusion, especially in a comparable research sample, we cannot go further on the discussion based on the published evidence.

Although we did not find a study with similar results on the contribution of N to the identity foreclosure, from a theoretical perspective, this connection seems to be reasonable. People with high N suffer more from negative emotions and might blame themselves because these negative beliefs about them. Parallelly, as we know from research history, the negative emotions and the self-blame of a person with high N, might also tell us about their low self-esteem, or the history of depression or both, as associated constructions (Roberts & Kendler, 1999; Schmitz et al., 2003; Yao, 2020). All these together can make them more vulnerable to the requirements of the family, critics of the authority, or the social pressure. On the other

hand, based on the theory of Marcia (1966, 2002), people with identity foreclosure are more vulnerable to undesirable criticism and their most exclusive characteristic is submission and respect for authority. What specifically distinguishes them from the achievement status is their poor performance on the stressful concept-attainment task with unrealistic reaction to failure and pursuing unattained high goals. In a practical context, our observations were in harmony with this connection between identity foreclosure and neuroticism. We have also observed that for many asylum seekers with high N, identity foreclosure could play a protecting role to avoid the negative emotions they experience when they find their identity under question.

Regarding the contribution of age and gender to identity foreclosure, we can refer to the possible role of self-esteem on the vulnerability of individuals to criticism and, the relationship between age and gender differences and self-esteem based on the literature. Bleidorn et al, (2016), in their large-scale study across 48 nations found out that self-esteem increases from late adolescence to middle adulthood associated with the age. They also reported significant gender differences in the level of self-esteem showing that men consistently have higher self-esteem levels compared to women. With age, people gain more self-esteem, their vulnerability to criticism and social pressure is less, and they are less likely to have a foreclosure identity. At the same time, women who report less self-esteem compared to men (Arshad et al., 2015; Bleidorn et al., 2016), are also more likely to show higher levels of identity foreclosure. On the other hand, based on the literature, women report higher neuroticism compared to men (Weisberg et al., 2011), so the higher possibility of identity foreclosure in women, can also be explained through the effect of N on identity foreclosure.

Regarding the contribution of education on identity foreclosure, we can also illustrate this connection by saying that the higher the level of education of a person, the higher the possibility to be exposed to a wider range of knowledge and information, different ideas and

ideologies, and more opportunities for their personal development in different areas of life. That is why it should be reasonably easier for a person with higher education to resist in front of the social authority's criticism and pressure compared to a person with lower education. At the same time, in a study by Checchi and Pravettoni (2003) results show that academic performance could strengthen self-efficacy. Connecting these findings to those of ours, we could assume that higher levels of education can give the people higher levels of confidence about the decisions they make by improving their self-efficacy, and can also support them to avoid commitments without explorations (identity foreclosure). Research also indicates that educational achievements in girls are more often effected by parents' interest than in boys (Flouri, 2006), which supports our findings that show that younger women are more likely to exhibit identity foreclosure, meaning that they are more submissive to the interests or orders of authorities including parents.

In our practical experiences with asylum seekers, we could also observe that women with younger age and lower education levels are more under control and pressure of their family, partner or their community, and the older and more educated they are, the more likely they independently decide about who they want to be.

HYPOTHESIS 4. In the asylum seeker group, Extraversion would positively predict Identity Moratorium.

Regarding Hypothesis 4, the obtained data shows that the hypothesis is confirmed. Our results indicate that Neuroticism and Extraversion positively predict identity moratorium. From among the sociodemographic variables introduced to the model, only gender inversely contributes. This indicates that female asylum seekers with higher levels of neuroticism and extraversion would be likely to exhibit higher levels of identity moratorium.

Reviewing the available literature, we did not find similar studies with the same variables, even in other study groups, however, we can refer to some studies that investigated

the association between these variables in other study groups. Our findings indicating the contribution of neuroticism on moratorium, are close to the results of the study by Hosseininasab et al. (2009) and Nedaeifar et al. (2019) in Iran with the same questionnaires, that showed a positive correlation between N and Identity Moratorium. At the same time, in the study of Clancy and Dollinger (1993), with the same questionnaires, identity moratorium was found to be associated to N. However, in none of these studies was there a correlation between E and moratorium. Since there is no association between extraversion and moratorium based on the previously mentioned studies, we could also say that our results are in the same line with the reviewed literature. On the other hand, in the study by Hatano et al. (2017) E had significant positive effects on different levels of exploration, which is the key dimension of moratorium.

Considering being a woman as an explanatory factor of being in moratorium identity status we can compare our results to those of Archer (1989) where women were significantly more likely to be in moratorium or identity achieved with regard to family roles. However, we should consider that this study was done on a sample of adolescents.

From the theoretical perspective, the positive contribution of N to moratorium could be understood by considering the motivating aspect of certain levels of stress or anxiety for some people. As we know, individuals high on N experience higher levels of stress in comparable challenging situations and respond more often or more strongly with negative emotions (Lahey, 2009). This stress might be bothering, but at the same time can act as a motivator for accomplishing tasks or changing the circumstances in order to reduce the level of stress. Gunthert et al. (1999) discusses based on the available literature that stress, in reasonable levels, could in fact have some advantages for the individuals. Especially manageable levels of daily stress, which is also named as eustress might enhance motivation (Aschbacher et al., 2013; Gunthert et al., 1999). What people need to change the situation that they are in, is found by exploring and looking for the possibilities they have. This

exploration especially when it is consciously happening, can also support a person to be in a moratorium phase for their identity.

On a practical level, the positive effect of N could be understood better in the situation of asylum seekers. Asylum seekers with high levels of anxiety might feel more motivated to investigate the possibilities they have in order to improve their situation or participate in social activities and other educational projects to decrease their level of stress.

Considering the characteristics of people with high extraversion, its positive effect on Moratorium is also very reasonable. People with higher E are more likely to be involved in a wide range of activities, although probably not deeply involved in all of them, and they gain and create energy in social circumstances (Friedman & Schustack, 1999). That is why they are more likely to explore and find their way to the activities they like the most or meet people with whom they might start a relationship or friendship. These all facilitate the exploration before commitment, which is exactly the phase of moratorium in identity construction. These characteristics help them get to know the possibilities they have, especially if they are asylum seekers.

The predictive role of being female on Moratorium can be explained by findings in the literature about the link between gender differences and N and E. Females exhibit higher neuroticism (Lynn & Martin, 1997; Weisberg et al., 2011), and extraversion (Weisberg et al., 2011), and considering the contribution of these two factors on moratorium, the higher possibility of moratorium among females compared to males is reasonable. At the same time, we should also consider that N and E are also explanatory factors for identity diffusion and the only difference is that gender is an explanatory factor for moratorium but not for identity diffusion. As a conclusion, we can say that a female asylum seeker with high N and E is more likely to experience a moratorium status rather than identity diffusion.

Moreover, based on the practical experiences and according to our observations, female asylum seekers more actively participate in different social activities, events and other

programs of integration that are not necessarily official training programs or courses. These social activities and programs introduce to them different possibilities for different areas of life including social and professional ones. However, since not all activities and events necessarily follow a certain plan or goal, these participations might lead them to stay longer in the phase of moratorium rather than committing to certain choices in different areas. On the other hand, from a cultural perspective, female asylum seekers are under less pressure to find a job and earn money. This also facilitates the process of exploring and investigating for the right options compared to the male asylum seekers who feel more pressure to find a job.

HYPOTHESIS 5. In the asylum seeker group, Conscientiousness would positively predict Identity Achievement.

The obtained data show that Hypothesis 5 is confirmed. Our results indicate that Conscientiousness had the largest positive contribution in predicting Identity Achievement, Extraversion and to a lesser extent Neuroticism also contributed to this prediction; whereas the sociodemographic factors did not yield any contribution. This means that an asylum seeker with high levels of conscientiousness, extraversion and neuroticism is more likely to commit to a healthy identity and experience the status of identity achievement, regardless of gender, age, civil status and the years of education.

Reviewing the literature, we did not find comparable studies with the aim of investigating the same relationship between variables. However, referring to some studies using the same questionnaires, allowed more insight about the connection between these variables. We assume that our findings are in the same direction with the findings of Clancy and Dollinger (1993), Nedaeifar et al. (2019), and Hosseininasab et al. (2009) about young adolescents. In these studies, identity achievement was associated to high C and E, and low N. Additionally, our findings match those of Dollinger (1995) administrating the Identity Style Inventory (Berzonsky, 1989), where the information-orientated style (matching identity

achievement) was positively associated to E and C, however, they reported no correlation between this identity style and N. Moreover, our results are also in line with the results of Roccas et al. (2002), in which Conscientiousness measured by the NEO-PI was positively correlated to achievement values measured by Schwartz (1992) value inventory. In our sample and for both groups, there was no correlation between N and identity achievement.

On the other hand, our findings are also in the same direction with the obtained data from the study of Hatano et al. (2017) applying the NEO-FFI and the Dimensions of Identity Development Scale (DIDS: Luyckx et al., 2006), where they found a positive contribution of C on different levels of exploration and commitment which are the key dimensions of identity achievement. However, our results regarding N are not in the same direction with their findings showing negative contribution.

Due to the scarcity of published literature on this topic, we cannot go further on the discussion regarding the relationship between personality and Identity Achievement.

Despite this and from the theoretical point of view, the contribution of C to identity achievement is rationally not difficult to be illustrated considering that people with higher levels of C show certain features including high levels of thoughtfulness, hard work, and goal-oriented behaviors (Power & Pluess, 2015). On the other hand, highly conscientious people tend to be organized and methodical (Costa & McCrae, 1992b). They are more likely to show self-discipline, feel and act responsible, and set goals and plan towards achievement (Thompson, 2008). At the same time, according to Marcia (1966, 2002) individuals with identity achievement are those who are committed to an occupation and an ideology. They have thoughtfully explored their possibilities and have decided on what they want to do based on their experiences. We can see that almost all the characteristics, mentioned for the people with high C could reasonably support them in their identity construction. There are also several studies which could support this connection indirectly. Based on the findings of Jin et al. (2009), C has a significant contribution to the progress in professional commitment both

directly and indirectly through career decision self-efficacy. According to the authors, specific characteristics related to C such as being achievement-oriented, efficient, and hardworking facilitate professional commitment. In another study by Jamshidi et al. (2012a), perseverance was found to be associated to creativity. These findings support the contribution of C to identity achievement, considering perseverance as one of the characteristics of individuals with high C and creativity as a characteristic which can facilitate identity achievement.

In a practical context we have observed that asylum seekers with high C are more likely to spend time thinking about their possibilities, setting realistic goals, planning and working hard to achieve their goals. They are more persevering when faced with challenges and continue with higher motivation to proceed and show higher levels of commitments. All of these characteristics support them in achieving a healthy identity.

The same logic applied to illustrate the contribution of E to moratorium can also explain the connection between E and identity achievement. As the common characteristic between identity moratorium and achievement is a high level or qualified exploration, E can reasonably facilitate exploration. Considering extraverts as being enthusiastic, and action-oriented (Friedman & Schustack, 1999) and that people with higher extraversion are more likely to attend social events and to stay in the group and socialize, our findings support the arguments of Erikson (1968) on how identity develops through different social experiments over the time in a person's entire life (Malone et al., 2016). Moreover, research indicates that people with higher sociability are more open to accept social support and advice (Gomà-i-Freixanet et al., 2021) which can directly and indirectly facilitate the process of identity achievement

Similarly, social interaction plays a very important role in how asylum seekers overcome the challenges related to the identity crisis (Smeekes et al., 2017). Our observations also indicate that the more extroverted they are, and the more social interactions they have,

the easier it gets for them to realize in which direction they want to move in their personal and professional life and consequently it is also easier to achieve a healthy identity.

The contribution of N to identity achievement can also be explained through the possible motivating role of stresses (Aschbacher et al., 2013). Gunthert et al. (1999) argues that one of the unexpected profits of stress is that it can help us to improve our social contacts. This can be especially important in interpersonal dimensions of identity including creating friendship and relationship. The motivating role of stress and its positive effect on the social relationships, especially in the case of asylum seekers with high C and E can be even more helpful for the identity development, as they already have high levels of sense of responsibility, and higher motivations for social interactions. Our experiences with asylum seekers support these connections very well.

HYPOTHESIS 6. In the asylum seeker group, Extraversion would positively predict Search for Meaning.

Our findings do not confirm Hypothesis 6. Neuroticism is the only personality factor positively predicting Search for Meaning while years of education predicts it negatively. This means that an asylum seeker with higher levels of neuroticism and lower levels of education is more likely in the phase of searching for meaning in their life.

Reviewing the literature, we did not find similar studies exploring the same relationship and applying the same questionnaires to measure these variables. However, we can compare our findings to studies investigating the same or similar variables. Our results indicating that N is a positive predictor of search for meaning is in the same direction with the results of Steger et al. (2008) where people with high scores in search for meaning obtained also higher scores on N. At the same time, considering negative affect as a characteristic of neuroticism, we can say that our results are somehow in the line with the findings of Isıka and Uzbe (2015) where negative affect measured by the Adjective-Based

Personality Test (ABPT: Bacanli et al., 2009) predicts the search for meaning measured by Meaning in Life Questionnaire. However, in their study E was also a predictor of search for meaning.

For our results indicating the negative contribution of years of education on search for meaning, we did not find similar studies. Due to the scarcity of published literature on this topic, we cannot go further on the discussion regarding the relationship between personality and search for meaning.

However, despite the lack of research history on this topic and the fact that the contribution of N to search for meaning was not what we assumed but yet we can see this connection reasonable from a theoretical perspective. High scores on N indicates an increased tendency to experience negative emotions. High scorers are emotional, unsure, stressed or worried (Johansson & Ölund, 2017). For the same reasons, people with high levels of N may also suffer more from emptiness resulting from lack of meaning in their life. Similar to what we explained about Moratorium, in this case, the higher levels of stress resulting from high neuroticism might act as a motivator to search for something that gives their life meaning. Moreover, Gunthert et al. (1999), argues the same tasks that creates stress for us, could also potentially bring meaning to our life.

The contribution of neuroticism in search for meaning is also more understandable in the situation of asylum seekers. The combination of bad feelings stemming from lack of meaning in the new condition as an asylum seeker in combination with the sad and anxious feelings originated from high N might motivate them to explore and search for something that gives their life meaning, hope or strength to continue.

Regarding the contribution of years of education to search for meaning, we should say that it is understandable that for the people with higher levels of education, it is easier to find the right job or responsibility in the society through their profession and this responsibility could be a source of meaning for them. That is why, a person with lower level of education is

more likely to be in a searching status than a person with a higher level. This logic is even more understandable in the situation of asylum seekers as those who have a certain level of education and higher, have more hope, structure, systemic support and possibilities to find a job or occupation that can give them a sense of meaning, compared to those with lower levels of education.

After all, we should also keep in mind that the search for meaning does not necessarily result in the presence of meaning. Steger et al. (2008) suppose that people suffering from lack of meaning search for it but yet the search for meaning alone does not seem to lead to the presence of meaning.

HYPOTHESIS 7. In the asylum seeker group, Neuroticism would negatively predict and Conscientiousness would positively predict Presence of Meaning.

Regarding Hypothesis 7, the obtained data show that it is partially confirmed. Based on the results, Conscientiousness along with years of education are the only predictors of Presence of Meaning. Based on this model, we can state that conscious and well-educated asylum seekers are more likely to find their life meaningful.

Reviewing the literature on this topic, the only comparable study we found was the one by Işıka and Üzbe (2015) where neuroticism was a negative predictor of presence of meaning in life. We did not find other similar studies that explore the same relationship between personality and presence of meaning and apply the same questionnaires to measure these variables. Thus, we are going to mention some other studies that are somewhat related. These results are neither similar to the results of Steger et al. (2008) applying the same questionnaires like in our study, in which C is positively correlated to presence of meaning nor to the ones by Demirbaş-Çelik and Korkut-Owen (2018) where they stated that stability, as a trait, including N, A and C does not predict meaning in life. However, the plasticity trait predicts meaning in life. Moreover, wellness mediates the relationship between plasticity and

meaning in life. They concluded that an increase in plasticity trait specifically referring to E and O can cause an increase in the level of individuals' understanding of meaning in life.

In another study by Halama (2005) among university students and elderly, applying NEO-FFI and two different meaningfulness measures, Reker's Personal Meaning Index (PMI; Reker, 2005) and Halama's Life Meaningfulness Scale (LMS), extraversion and meaningfulness were positively associated, and neuroticism and meaningfulness were negatively associated. A close relationship was also identified between meaningfulness and conscientiousness.

Moreover, in a research by Lavigne et al. (2013), among university students, who completed the Sources of Meaning and Meaning in Life questionnaire and the Big Five Aspects Scale, the results showed that respondents with high scores on lower-level aspects of Openness to Experience tended to derive meaning from questioning, learning and challenging tradition, whereas those with high scores on aspects of Conscientiousness and Extraversion tended to derive meaning from success at work, health, and family. Results suggest that personality traits are associated with variations in the domains used to derive meaning in life.

We did not find any comparable research on the contribution of education to presence of meaning in life.

From the theoretical point of view, the positive effect of C on Presence of Meaning is also reasonable considering the theory of Viktor Frankl (2000) and the characteristics od people with high Conscientiousness. These people are more persevering in the face of problems and maintain a realistic level of ambition. They plan ahead, think about how their behavior affects others and exhibit more empathy (Melchers et al., 2016). On the other hand, Frankl's theory of meaning in life provides a strong indication of individual's responsibility which originated from the freedom to choose, even in the face of the most tragic situations and their limitations (Esping, 2008). Elizabeth (2020) illustrates this connection by saying that when someone successfully finds a personal meaning in their life, we can expect that

they have some kind of responsibility. Having responsibility means that we have to deliberately behave or act in a certain way. As a consequence, the condition of being responsible for our actions and behaviors, and the freedom that we have to choose them, gives an individual the possibility to develop a sense of personal meaning. For the same reasons, a person with high levels of conscientiousness, who is more likely to have a higher sense of responsibility and is more preserving and hard working in times of hardship, is more likely to find meaning or meanings for their life. Moreover, in a study by Jamshidi et al. (2012b), a significant positive association between creativity and perseverance was found that can explain the relationship between conscientiousness and meaning in life from another perspective. Considering perseverance as one of the characteristics of C and creativity as a characteristic which can support a person to find meaning in life through being productive and fruitful, we can assume the possibility that conscientiousness might predict meaning in life through higher perseverance and creativity.

According to our experience, asylum seekers with high C are more likely find something to do, or a responsibility to take on, or a goal to be committed to. All these characteristics can encourage individuals to find their meaning in their lives.

The contribution of education to presence of meaning is also very reasonable. The meaning in life for individuals with a certain level of education can come from the goals they set for their current or future jobs, the aim of having certain responsibilities in the society and serving people through their professions. We can also refer to the argument of Landau (2022) about students' contribution in the schools and teachers' education that can already create unique possibilities for their sense of meaning in life. For all of the mentioned reasons, a person with higher levels of education has potentially more possibilities to find meaning in their lives. This can be especially true for asylum seekers as they often need to find new sources of meaning for their lives in the country of destination, and higher levels of education or certain skills can facilitate finding their place in society.

HYPOTHESIS 8. In the asylum seeker group, Neuroticism would negatively predict and Conscientiousness would positively predict Purpose in Life.

The obtained results show that regarding Hypothesis 8, this is partially confirmed. According to the outcomes, Neuroticism negatively and Extraversion positively contribute to purpose in life. Conscientiousness and the sociodemographic variables introduced to the model have no contribution to this variable. Based on these findings, low levels of neuroticism and higher level of extraversion among asylum seekers are the explanatory factors for having a purpose in life. This means that an asylum seeker with lower neuroticism and higher extraversion is more likely to have a purpose in life.

In the literature reviewed, we did not find similar studies exploring the relationship between personality and identity statuses and applying the same questionnaires to measure these variables. Thus, we are going to mention some others that are somewhat related.

Our findings indicating on the contribution of N to purpose in life is close to the results of Addad (1987) in which he obtained a clear negative correlation between neuroticism and purpose in life. At the same time, he did not find any correlation between extraversion and purpose in life while based on our results not only extraversion has a positive correlation with purpose in life, but it is also a positive predictor of purpose in life, although with a weak strength. The differences seen in the results of these two studies could be originated from the different samples and questionnaires used. Concerning the connection between neuroticism and purpose in life, we can also refer to the results of older research by Black and Gregson (1973) on New Zealand Prisoners, which showed that recidivists exhibited higher levels of Neuroticism and low levels of purpose in life and, at least as long as they are in the prison.

Moreover, our results representing the contribution of extraversion to purpose in life are close to the findings of Schnell and Becker (2006) where they found positive contributions of E, O and C based on Trier Integrated Personality Inventory (TIPI: Becker,

2002) to meaningfulness applying Crumbaugh and Maholick's Purpose in Life Test (PIL, 1964).

From a theoretical point of view, our results indicating the negative contribution of N to purpose in life can be on one hand illustrated through the mentioned characteristics of neuroticism based on Costa and McCrae (1992). On the other hand based on all associated constructions to N and how they might indirectly influence a person's ability to create or find purposes in life, especially when talking about asylum seekers.

Research indicates on strong positive association of neuroticism with anxiety (De Raad & Mlačić et al., 2015; Vittengl, 2017). At the same time, its correlation to other important psychological constructions like examination anxiety (Asghari et al., 2013), and text anxiety (Jamshidi et al., 2012b), has been examined and confirmed. Anxiety, especially anxiety for being tested or examined can be a very big obstacle on a person's way on self-development and setting realistic and achievable goals in their life. On the other hand, we know that self-handicapping which is a cognitive strategy by which people avoid effort in the hopes of keeping potential failure from hurting self-esteem (Kolditz & Arkin, 1982) is another associated concept with neuroticism that means the higher the level of neuroticism in individuals, the higher the possibility that they are self-handicapping (Jamshidi et al., 2012b; Ross et al., 2002). Moreover, literature also indicates on the associations between higher levels of N and lower levels of self-esteem (Roberts & Kendler, 1999; Yao, 2020), or history of depression or both (Schmitz et al., 2003), and it is reasonable that low levels of self-esteem or higher levels of depression could also have a prohibiting role on setting goals or having clear purposes in life.

Once more, all mentioned associations which make the contribution of neuroticism to purpose in life are more reasonable in the situation of asylum seekers with its unique challenges for self-esteem. Asylum seekers with high N are very likely to suffer from higher anxiety, especially in the situation of exams, self-handicapping lower self-esteem, and

depression, and these all, beside lack of information in different areas, act as obstacles in their path to explore the right options for setting goals and clear purposes in their lives.

The positive effect of Extraversion on the purpose in life is also understandable based on its criteria in Five Factor Model (Costa and McCrae, 1992a) as mentioned earlier. People with high levels of E are supposed to be enthusiastic and assertive (DeYoung et al., 2007). Enthusiasm in this context refers to the characteristics like sociability, satisfaction, and interests for being rewarded. Assertiveness consists of representation, being active at the same time with authority, and the yearning for being rewarded (DeYoung et al., 2013). Both of these characteristics are supposed to facilitate social interactions (Frisk et al., 2021), but we can also see that all of these characteristics prepare a person for setting goals and having purposes to achieve. Our experiences with asylum seekers also indicate that the more sociable, enthusiastic and assertive they are, the higher is the possibility that they find the right and clear purposes to follow.

HYPOTHESIS 9. In the asylum seeker group, Identity Foreclosure would negatively predict and Identity Moratorium would positively predict Search for Meaning.

The obtained data show that the Hypothesis 9 is partially confirmed. Based on the findings, Identity Foreclosure does not predict Search for Meaning while Identity Moratorium positively does. At the same time, the years of education are a negative predictor of search for meaning while the rest of the sociodemographic variables do not contribute to it. Consequently, we can state that an asylum seeker exhibiting search for meaning would probably score higher on identity achievement and have lower levels of education.

Reviewing the literature, we did not find any study investigating a cause-and-effect relationship between the same variables like the one in our study and applying the same questionnaires; however, we can compare our results to some similar studies. Our results indicating a positive contribution of moratorium on search for meaning are in line with the

results of Negru-Subtirica et al. (2016), where they found positive mutual associations between search for meaning and exploration processes. At the same time, our results are not in the same direction with the findings of Beaumont (2009), using the Identity Style Inventory (Berzonsky, 1989), where search for meaning was positively related with normative (the identity style matching identity foreclosure) and diffuse styles (the identity style matching identity diffusion) but had no significant relationship with informational style. Our findings do not match those of Babaj and Sruti Lall (2018) where search for meaning in life correlated positively with information-oriented style (the identity style matching identity achievement) and normative styles (the identity style matching identity foreclosure).

For our results indicating the negative contribution of education on search for meaning, we did not find similar studies. Due to the scarcity of published literature on this topic, we cannot go further on the discussion regarding the relationship between search for meaning and ego identity statuses.

The contribution of identity moratorium to search for meaning, is what we assumed to obtain, based on both the theory and our practical experiences. It is also understandable that a person who is actively searching their options to answer the questions "who am I?" or "who do I want to be?", is the same person also who is actively searching to find something to give their life a meaning. On the other hand, what individuals are going to find in different dimensions of life that could support them to define themselves as an identity might be nothing except what gives them a reason to work, mentally and psychologically feel better, or cognitively be more active, and these are all what can also give their lives also a sense of meaning, even if they are not fully aware of these psychological concepts. Gambini and Gonsalves (2018) have studied almost the same connection in their study and argue that the theoretical concept that is supporting the search for meaning is at the same time the motivational dynamism that unifies, guides and supports the construction of identity. Although the focus in this study is on adolescents, our practical experiences with asylum

seekers concur significantly with their arguments, especially where they indicate how the journeys towards the search for identity and meaning happen parallel to each other and continue in most cases in an unconscious level rather than conscious. Among asylum seekers, those who are actively studying or trying different options for their future career, those who are openly listening to different news, information, and perspectives and trying to choose their viewpoints consciously (people with Identity Moratorium) are mostly the same people who are looking for new meanings in their lives which can replace the meanings they had in their home country even if these explorations and quests are not completely conscious and planned.

HYPOTHESIS 10. In the asylum seeker group, Identity Diffusion would negatively predict and Identity Achievement would positively predict Presence of Meaning.

Regarding Hypothesis 10, the obtained data show that it is fully confirmed. Based on the data obtained from the model including identity statuses and sociodemographic variables, Identity Achievement positively predicts, and Identity Foreclosure and Identity Diffusion negatively predict presence of meaning. None of the sociodemographic variables has a contribution to presence of meaning. From these results, we can say that asylum seekers showing higher levels of identity achievement, and lower levels of identity foreclosure and diffusion are more likely experiencing presence of meaning in their life.

In the literature reviewed, we did not find similar studies exploring the relationship between identity statuses and presence of meaning that apply the same questionnaires. Thus, we are going to mention some others that are related. Our findings indicating the contribution of identity achievement to presence of meaning are close to the results of Negru-Subtirica et al. (2016), where positive mutual associations between commitment processes measured and presence of meaning were found. These results are in line with those of Bahadori and Aliloo (2012), where informative identity style (matching identity achievement) measured by

Identity Style Inventory (Berzonsky, 1989) was a positive predictor of meaning in life measured by Meaning in Life questionnaire from Salehi (1995). In the same study, diffused Identity style (matching the identity diffusion) is a negative predictor of meaning in life which is similar to our results indicating the negative contribution of identity diffusion on presence of meaning. Due to the scarcity of published literature on this topic, we cannot go further on the discussion regarding the contribution of Identity achievement on presence of meaning.

However, from a theoretical perspective, regarding contribution of Identity achievement on presence of meaning, we can apply the same logic that connects a conscious search for identity (Moratorium) to Search for meaning. The same beliefs, roles responsibilities, or relationships that could support individuals to identify themselves, could also support them in finding meaning in their lives. Elizabeth (2020) illustrates this connection in a somehow similar and meaningful way. This author connects the things we do in our lives, as a result of knowing what we want to do with our lives which give us possibilities to identify ourselves with the reasons we have for doing these things that in turn give our lives meaning. They believe that we invest a lot of time to study, or to build a career, to find friends or experience new hobbies or possibilities, and when we succeed in what we want to be or to do, it is time to ask ourselves why we want all of these things, and the answer to this question is what potentially gives our lives meaning.

Our results indicating on the negative contribution of identity foreclosure and identity diffusion to presence of meaning could be understood better based on the arguments of Erikson that individuals who are not allowed to explore and test out different identities might be left with what he referred to as role confusion, which can lead to certain problems. They might be uncertain about who they are and confused about where their place in the society is. They might experience moving from one job or relationship to another, so often in their life (McLean & Syed, 2016). It is very reasonable that individuals who have missed a phase of

conscious exploration or are very unstable in their choices, can not easily find meaning in their lives either. In the case of identity diffusion, when the individuals have not consciously explored their options in different dimensions of life to find something that they could be committed to, it would be consistently difficult to find something that could give their lives meaning. In the case of people with foreclosure identity, although they have something to be committed to, they can probably not easily answer the question, why? Why they chose these responsibilities or commitments? since these are not what they have really explored, searched and chose. That is why these commitments cannot easily bring a sense of meaning to their lives.

Our practical experiences with asylum seekers also show that for the asylum seekers who already know who they are and who they want to be, it is much easier to be committed to something beyond their selves, and what gives their lives meaning. At the same time, for asylum seekers who do not yet know how to define themselves as a member of their family, community or society, in the same way, it would not be easy to find something that can bring a sense of meaning into their lives.

HYPOTESIS 11. In the asylum seeker group, Identity diffusion would negatively predict and Identity Achievement would positively predict Purpose in Life.

Regarding Hypothesis 11, the obtained data show that it is partially confirmed. Our results indicate that Identity Achievement is positively predicting Purpose in Life positively but identity diffusion has no contribution to purpose in life. At the same time, none of other identity statuses and sociodemographic variables have any contribution to purpose in life.

In the literature reviewed, we did not find similar studies exploring the relationship between personality and identity statuses and applying the same questionnaires to measure these variables. Thus, we are going to mention some others somewhat related.

Our results indicating that Identity Achievement is a positive predictor of purpose in life are close to previous results obtained by Bronk (2011), where Identity development and purposeful commitments measured by semi-structured case study style interviews strengthened each other. In other words, identity development reinforced commitments to purpose and purpose led to identity development. These results also support the findings of Madrazo (2014) where purpose commitment mediated the relationship between identity commitment and life satisfaction. In another study by Rahiminezhad et al. (2011) in Iran it was revealed that "Purpose in Life" significantly and positively predicts commitment. However, no significant effect of "Purpose in Life" on Exploration has been found. These findings, along with our findings, call attention to the strong connection between having a purpose or being committed to a purpose and identity development in general.

At the same time, from a theoretical perspective, it is also reasonable to consider the definition of Marcia (1966, 2002) about Identity Achievement and the concept of purpose in life based on the theory of Frankl (1946). When we know who we are, and who we want to be, we would also set some goals or define some purposes based on these wishes about who we plan to be. Our experience with asylum seekers confirms our results amply. Asylum seekers who successfully passed the identity crisis and are in a stable and healthy status in their identity development can also successfully set goals, define purposes and plan for their lives in the new country. From a career building perspective, they know what is the job that they want to have at the moment or in the future, and they know very well which steps they have to take to reach the goals that they have for their current and future career.

Limitations and Strength Points of the Study

All studies have certain limitations that are worth mentioning:

1. The assessment package administered to the participants included four different questionnaires containing 154 items in total, which could be a burden for the participants that are not used to answering psychological questions regarding their thoughts or beliefs.

2. The four questionnaires used in this research were validated in Iran and in Persian language. However, we could not find any published study where the reliability of these tools for the general population was reported which impeded us to compare it with the obtained results.

3. Our sample in Germany included people coming to Germany as asylum seekers from Iran and Afghanistan. However, it was almost impossible to set a clear distinction between these two nationalities as many asylum seekers who are supposed to be from Afghanistan, were in fact born and raised in Iran or had been living in Iran since their childhood or for many years.

4. The results of this study cannot be easily generalized to other groups of asylum seekers from other countries or cultural background as every host country has its own regulations, supporting systems and challenges for asylum seekers. At the same time and for the same reason, they cannot be also easily generalized to the same cultural group of asylum seekers living in other host countries.

Nevertheless our study has some **strengths** that are also important to point out:

1. Our sample size of asylum seekers was quite big compared to other studies in this field especially considering the dual typology of difficulties we had to face to make this kind of study. On one hand, we had to overcome a lot of legal barriers from local authorities to get permission to enter the camps to do the research. On the other hand, we had to do a lot of daily work to get the confidence of the asylees and be part of the study group as the questions they had to answer were sensitive and very personal.

2. Regarding the comparison group, named the local group, we tried for it to be as comparable as possible to the asylum seeker group regarding age, civil status, spoken language and culture. This strategy allowed us to have two very comparable groups regarding some relevant sociodemographic variables.

3. Another important point is that the questionnaires we administered were in their own language, Farsi. This fact helped to have a better comprehension of the items they had to answer, especially for the asylum seekers as they had a lower level of education compared to the general population.

4. We also have to underline that, contrarily to common practice in studies with asylum seekers that either focus on sociodemographic variables or on psychological ones; in our study we collected both kind of variables at a time, sociodemographic variables as well as variables from the domain of individual differences, identity status, and meaning and purpose in life.

5. This research was conducted by a person sharing the same language and culture of the participants. This fact could help to attenuate the barriers that sometimes are built between the researchers from the academia and the studied persons most of the time due to acting at different registers.

6. Finally, we have to point out that our research provides a different approach to the study of identity crisis in asylum seekers. Instead of focusing on the predictive power of environmental factors, we rather concentrate on the role of individual differences by studying personality factors. The importance of studying personality and what differentiates it from other explanatory factors is that personality is supposed to be more independent from the influences of the individual's environment.

7. Last but not least, this is the first study that calls attention to the importance of having presence or lack of meaning in the life of asylum seekers providing a more in-depth

understanding of the contribution of identity statuses and personality factors to the meaning and purpose that asylum seekers find in their life.

Implications of this Study

This is the final section of our thesis, and before concluding we would like to mention the most applied findings of our research based on the results we have obtained. In the next paragraphs we are going to indicate the most important implications of our study.

1. Regarding **Identity diffusion**, our model indicated that having higher scores on Neuroticism and Extraversion might be risk factors indicative of displaying identity diffusion and that none of the sociodemographic variables considered were a significant predictor of this status. Consequently, if we want to support asylum seekers to leave this status behind and explore their possibilities with awareness and be able to make commitments, we have to intervene on N and E. Although the level of N seems to be resistant to change, it can be handled through precise interventions. Supporting programs that enhance awareness about one's emotional instability, low self-esteem, and self-handicapping could be very helpful. At the same time, introducing skills to improve the level of self-esteem, manage anxiety, or avoid self-handicapping, could indirectly empower asylum seekers to overcome negative emotions and self-judgment coming from high N, and remove some of the mental barriers on the way of identity achievement and experiencing a meaningful life as a result. Regarding acting on E and in order to avoid failure in a healthy identity achievement process, some aspects of E should be decreased to a certain level too. Although E is a quite stable and persistent personality factor but yet we could support this group with individual or group programs that enhance the level of awareness about the advantages of participating in different social events and programs for their personal and identity development rather than for only distracting themselves from their daily stresses, or satisfying their need for social interactions. Furthermore, we could also support them through counseling to learn how to

consciously choose their activities based on certain ideas and goals rather than only joining in different programs without having a clear mind about the possibilities they provide for them.

2. Concerning **Identity foreclosure**, our model specified that higher scores on Neuroticism concurrently with younger age, being female and having lower levels of education are risk factors for exhibiting identity foreclosure. This suggests that poorly educated young females with high N are more likely accepting commitment before a mature exploration. Consequently, in a practical context, we need to pay especial attention to this group of people as its high level of insecurity might lead them to avoid a challenging but healthy identity achievement process. Learning certain skills could support them in overcoming their feelings of insecurity and fears and gain the necessary power to investigate and try different roles and perspectives. Finally, considering that higher levels of education decrease the possibility of identity foreclosure and that actually this is the only factor among all contributors we can intervene on, providing education to asylum seekers will help not only their identity achievement process but also their integration process in the host society.

3. About **Identity moratorium**, our model indicated that having higher scores on Neuroticism and Extraversion, and being female, are explanatory factors for displaying identity moratorium. Based on these findings, higher levels of N do not necessarily contribute to the undesirable identity statuses but also to the identity status that could potentially lead to a healthy identity. Similarly, this happens with higher levels of E. Consequently, if we want to promote asylum seekers to proceed in their identity development, we should motivate them to explore their possibilities and to stay focused by learning skills to reduce the distracting roles of these two personality factors. Moreover, these findings call our attention to the gender differences in the way asylum seekers react to the challenges for their identity at the same time with their personality diversities. They also suggest that we have to pay attention and increase our care on female asylum seekers as they are more likely to remain at the moratorium status.

4. Regarding **Identity achievement**, higher scores on Conscientiousness and to a lesser extent on Extraversion and Neuroticism are indicative factors that propitiate the achievement of a healthy identity status. The contribution of C to this status, indicates on the unique importance of this personality factor as it does not contribute to any other identity status. If we want to intervene on this status, we could empower asylum seekers by encouraging the sense of responsibility, patience, perseverance, creativity and similar characteristics which are associated to C and therefore facilitate the process of identity achievement. Regarding E and as mentioned before, intervention plans should consider individualized programs including counseling in finding their right talents and interests. Finally, we should indicate that interventions for N do not necessarily mean to reduce the level of anxiety to a minimum but rather to a manageable and motivating level. Interestingly, none of the sociodemographic variables considered had an effect on this status.

5. Concerning **Search for Meaning,** higher scores on Neuroticism concurrently with lower levels of education were explanatory factors for exhibiting search for meaning. If we want to empower this group of asylum seekers we need to design educational and counseling programs that guides them to a healthy search that potentially lead to find meaning in life. These programs should at the same time consider their levels of N and its challenges, their life history, their interests and talents too. However, we should also keep in mind that search for meaning is not necessarily leading to finding meaning in life. That is why it is important to consider these variables at the same time with those that contribute to presence of meaning.

6. About **Presence of Meaning,** Conscientiousness and higher levels of education contributed to having presence of meaning in life. Empowering asylum seekers by encouraging the sense of responsibility, patience, perseverance, creativity and similar characteristics, and at the same time increasing the years of education through educational programs could potentially enhance their competence in maintaining and reaffirming their meanings in life.

7. Regarding **Purpose in Life,** lower scores on Neuroticism concurrently with higher scores on Extraversion, although to a lesser extent, contributed to having purpose. Consequently, if we want to support asylum seekers to find or develop purposes in their life, we have to introduce skills that reduce their level of anxiety to a manageable level and increase their self-evaluation. Additionally, in designing supporting programs it is important to consider approaches intended for the introverts more interested on individual activities rather than on crowded social events.

8. Being at the moratorium status concurrently with lower levels of education contributed to **Search for Meaning.** If we want to encourage asylum seekers to search for new meanings, we should empower them to have a healthy exploration of their possibilities in the new situation before making commitments. At the same time, as mentioned before, since the search for meaning is not necessarily leading to presence of meaning, we should consider the effective factors that contribute to presence of meaning in order to support asylum seekers to have a healthy search that leads to a meaningful result. However, designing programs that guide them in their explorations and search, to the right choices and commitments, could support them to maintain on the right way that leads to a meaningful life.

9. Regarding **Presence of Meaning**, lower levels of identity diffusion and foreclosure concurrently with higher identity achievement contributed to Presence of Meaning. These findings suggest that if we want to empower asylum seekers to find new meanings in their life, we should design programs that support them to leave behind identity diffusion and foreclosure, explore their different possibilities for personal development and guide them to commitments based on awareness and finally a healthy identity achievement. Moreover, counseling sessions that support them in overcoming their challenges in their identity construction or reconstruction successfully could actually guide them to the right meanings in their life.

10. Concerning **Purpose in Life,** Identity achievement is the only identity status that contributes to and its effect is very considerable. None of the sociodemographic variables considered added to purpose in life. This indicates that if we want to design programs that guide asylum seekers in finding new purposes, we should first guide them to the right commitments after conscious explorations. At the same time, counseling sessions that support them to answer the main questions of identity and to progress in their identity development could actually lead to define or find the right purposes for their life.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As a final conclusion, we are going to describe the most valuable findings from our research along with some recommendations based on the empirical research, our findings and our own experience with asylum seekers:

1. Asylum seekers with higher Neuroticism might exhibit any of the four identity statuses, the desirable and undesirable ones. Moreover, they might be motivated to search for meaning or have difficulties in setting purposes in life. Therefore, a balanced intervening approach to support them in developing a healthy identity and a purposeful life, would be the one that empower them to manage their stress and anxiety to a reasonable and manageable level and at the same time keep or enhance their motivation.

2. Asylum seekers with higher Extraversion have better chances to achieve a healthy identity and find new purposes in their life. Therefore, supporting programs should pay especial attention to introverted asylum seekers by designing more individualized and personalized approaches.

3. Asylum seekers with higher Conscientiousness are more likely succeeding in identity achievement and finding meaning in their life. Consequently, supporting programs encouraging the characteristics associated to conscientiousness will empower them in finding their right place in the society and advance in their personal growth.

4. Female asylum seekers with younger age and lower education levels, are more likely experiencing identity foreclosure which creates challenges for their mental health and integration. Considering the statistics on domestic violence against women who want to refuse their forced traditional roles, it is very crucial to provide careful supports for this layer of community of asylum seekers.

5. Asylum seekers with higher levels of education are less likely exhibiting identity foreclosure and more likely finding meaning in their life. Considering that, among all studied factors, education is the only one we can widely intervene on, it seems to be essential to include educational programs in our intervention approaches.

6. Asylum seekers who experience moratorium or explore their possibilities with awareness, would more likely search for meaning and those with identity achievement would more likely find meaning in their life. These connections call attention to an interesting relationship between the progress of asylum seekers in identity development and their growth in finding new meanings and purposes in their life, which should be considered in our intervention approaches.

7. Identity achievement is in one hand mediating the relationship between Extraversion and purpose in life and on the other hand, the relationship between Conscientiousness and presence of meaning in life. These findings are indicative of the facilitating role of identity achievement, like a bridge between these two personality factors and finding meaning and purpose in life and call attention to the direct and indirect effects of these personality factors on asylum seekers' success in finding meaning and purpose in life.

As final and practical **recommendations** we should mention the following:

a) If we want asylum seekers to feel mentally healthier and be more integrated in the host society, we have to empower them to find new purposes or meanings in their life. To achieve this goal, we have to support them in their process of identity achievement and one of

our main instruments for intervening is to consider their personality and create awareness about their personality profile.

b) Integration programs should be planned in a more individual and personalized level, and not always as a general indiscriminate offer for all without considering individual differences. In order to plan a tailored intervention considering individual's personality, interests and talents, responsible organizations need to provide more individualized counseling offers in different areas including mental health, learning, education, and job and career counseling. And finally,

c) Supporting programs through instruction and education should be administrated as soon as possible after the arrival of asylum seekers to the host country and preferably in their native language so as to facilitate a quicker learning and increase the feeling of self-confidence in the foreign country.

References

Aarethun, V., Sandal, G., Guribye, E., Markova, V., & Bye, H. (2021). Explanatory models and help-seeking for symptoms of PTSD and depression among Syrian refugees. *Social Science & Medicine*, *277*, 113889. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.113889

Adams, G. R., & Marshall, S. (1996). A Developmental Social Psychology of Identity: Understanding the Person-in-Context. *Journal of Adolescence*, *17(5)*, 429 – 442. https://doi.org/10.1006/jado.1996.0041

Adams, G. R., Shea, J., & Fitch, S. A. (1979). Toward the development of an objective assessment of ego-identity status. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *8*(2), 223 – 237. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02087622

Addad, M. (1987). Neuroticism, extraversion and meaning of life: A comparative study of criminals and non-criminals. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *8*(6), 879 – 883. https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869(87)90139-5

Allport, G. W., & Odbert, H. S. (1936). Trait-names: A psycho-lexical study. *Psychological Monographs*, *47*(1), i–171. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0093360

Al-zoubi, E. M. (2020). Social Identity Formation in Higher Education Students and Its Relationship with Attachment Patterns. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, *10*(3), 60 – 69. https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2020-0046

American Psychological Association. (2022). *Personality*. https://www.apa.org/topics/personality

Amnesty International. (2019, July 2). *What's the difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker?* Amnesty International Australia. https://www.amnesty.org.au/refugee-and-an-asylum-seeker-difference/

Amnesty International. (2021, June 23). *Greece: Europe must shoulder the burden for 46,000 refugees and migrants trapped in squalor.* https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/04/refugees-trapped-in-greece/

Archer, S. L. (1989). Gender differences in identity development: issues of process, domain and timing. *Journal of Adolescence*, *12*(2), 117 – 138. https://doi.org/10.1016/0140-1971(89)90003-1

Arshad, M., Zaidi, S. M. I. H., & Mahmood, K. (2015). Self-Esteem and Academic Performance among University Students. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *6*(1) 156 – 162.

Aschbacher, K., O'Donovan, A., Wolkowitz, O. M., Dhabhar, F. S., Su, Y., & Epel, E. (2013). Good stress, bad stress and oxidative stress: Insights from anticipatory cortisol reactivity. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, *38*(9), 1698 – 1708. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2013.02.004

Asfaw, B. B., Beiersmann, C., Keck, V., Nikendei, C., Benson-Martin, J., Schütt, I., & Lohmann, J. (2020). Experiences of psychotherapists working with refuges in Germany: a qualitative study. *BMC Psychiatry*, *20*(1), 1 – 8. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02996-0

Asghari, A., Abdul.Kadir, R., bte, Elias, H. bte, & Baba, M. bte. (2013). Personality traits and examination anxiety: Moderating role of gender. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, *59*(1), 45 – 54. https://doi.org/10.11575/ajer.v59i1.55655

Askarian Moghadam, H., Bagheri, F., Jazayeri, M., Torkaman, M., & Amiri, H. (2013). مقايسة Association] عادي زنان و اساسي افسردگي اختلال به مبتلا زنان در هويت هاي سبك و هيجاني هوش between Emotional Comparison of Emotional Intelligence and Identity styles in women with major depression and normal women]. *Knowledge & Research in Applied Psychology*, *14*(2), 109 – 119.

Aslam, A. (2018, March 19). *UK's 'Unfair' Refugee Laws Keep Families Apart*. The Globe Post. https://theglobepost.com/2018/03/14/britain-refugee-family-laws/

Babaj, V., & Sruti Lall, S. (2018). The Relationship between Identity, Self- Esteem and Meaning in Life among Late Adolescent Women. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *6*(4) 100 – 119. https://doi.org/10.25215/0604.013

Bacanli, H., İlhan, T., & Aslan, S. (2009). Beş faktör kuramina dayali bir kişilik ölçeğinin geliştirilmesi: sifatlara dayali kişilik testi (SDKT) [Development of a personality scale based on the Five Factor theory: adjective personality test (SDKT)]. *Türk Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, *7*(2), 261 – 279.

Bahadori Khosroshahi, J., & Aliloo, M. M. (2012). زندگی معنای با هویت های سبک بین رابطه بررسی دانشجويان در [The correlation between identity style and meaning of life]. *Quarterly Journal of Psychological Studies*, *8*(2), 143–164. https://doi.org/10.22051/PSY.2012.1720

Barnes, R. C. (2000). Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy: Spirituality and Meaning in the New Millennium. *TCA Journal*, *28*(1), 24 – 31. https://doi.org/10.1080/15564223.2000.12034561

Baumel, W. T., & Constantino, J. N. (2020). Implementing Logotherapy in its Second Half-Century: Incorporating Existential Considerations into Personalized Treatment of Adolescent Depression. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *59*(9), 1012 – 1015. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2020.06.006

Beaumont, S. L. (2009). Identity Processing and Personal Wisdom: An Information-Oriented Identity Style Predicts Self-Actualization and Self-Transcendence. *Identity*, *9*(2), 95–115. https://doi.org/10.1080/15283480802669101

Becker, P. (2002). The Trier Integrated Personality Inventory. Development of the instrument and comparative psychometric analyses according to the ordinal Rasch model and classical test theory. *DIAGNOSTICA*, *48*(2), 68 – 79.

Benner, A. D., Wang, Y., Shen, Y., Boyle, A. E., Polk, R., & Cheng, Y. P. (2018). Racial/ethnic discrimination and well-being during adolescence: A meta-analytic review. *American Psychologist*, *73*(7), 855 – 883. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000204

Bennion, L. D., & Adams, G. R. (1986). A Revision of the Extended Version of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status: An Identity Instrument for Use with Late Adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *1*(2), 183 – 197. https://doi.org/10.1177/074355488612005

Berck, L. E. (2017). *Development Through the Lifespan* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.

Berry, J. W., Phinney, J. S., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. E. (2006). *Immigrant youth in cultural transition: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation across national contexts*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Berzonsky, M. D. (1989). Identity Style. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *4*(3), 268 – 282. https://doi.org/10.1177/074355488943002

Binder, A., Denkinger, J., Rometsch-Ogioun El Sount, C., Windthorst, P., Engelhardt, M., Ringwald, J., Stuber, F., Nikendei, C., Kindermann, D., Komandur, P., Zipfel, S., & Junne, F. (2020). Psychological burden, stressors and resources of social workers working with women and children who suffered extreme violence by the 'Islamic state': A mixed method study. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, *132*, 109959. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2020.109959

Black, W. A. M., & Gregson, R. A. M. (1973). Time Perspective, Purpose in Life, Extraversion and Neuroticism in New Zealand Prisoners. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *12*(1), 50 – 60. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8260.1973.tb00845.x

Bleidorn, W., Arslan, R. C., Denissen, J. J. A., Rentfrow, P. J., Gebauer, J. E., Potter, J., & Gosling, S. D. (2016). Age and gender differences in self-esteem—A cross-cultural window. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *111*(3), 396 – 410. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000078

Blundell-Wignall, A., & Moulette, P. (2015). *Responses to the refugee crisis, corruption and the smuggling of refugees*. https://www.oecd.org/corruption/Corruption-and-the-smuggling-of-refugees.pdf

Boccagni, P., & Righard, E. (2020). Social work with refugee and displaced populations in Europe: (dis)continuities, dilemmas, developments. *European Journal of Social Work*, *23*(3), 375 – 383. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2020.1767941

Boeree, C. G. (2017). *Viktor Frankl, Personality Theories*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Bolter, J. (2019, June 11). *Explainer: Who is an Immigrant?* Migration Policy Institute. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/content/explainer-who-immigrant

Boyce, M. (2001). *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Boyle, G. J., Stankov, L., Martin, N. G., Petrides, K., Eysenck, M. W., & Ortet, G. (2016). Hans J. Eysenck and Raymond B. Cattell on intelligence and personality. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *103*, 40 – 47. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.04.029

Bratko, D., Butković, A., & Hlupić, T. V. (2017). Heritability of Personality. *Psychological Topics*, *26*(1), 1 – 24. https://doi.org/10.31820/pt.26.1.1

Brook, K. A. (2018). *The Jews of Khazaria* (3rd ed.). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Bronk, K. C. (2011). The role of purpose in life in healthy identity formation: A grounded model. *New Directions for Youth Development*, *2011*(132), 31 – 44. https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.426

Bulgin, K. (2018). The Refugee Identity Crisis: How Athens is Trying to Bridge the Gap between a Person and their Homeland through Heritage and Meaning Making, Borders & Remembrance of Things Past. *University of Kent*, *9 & 10,* 39 – 64.

Burnett, K. (2013). *Feeling like an outsider: a case study of refugee identity in the Czech Republic* (Publication No. 510947989) [Doctoral dissertation, Chicago State University]. UNHCR.

Carver, C. S., & Connor-Smith, J. (2010). Personality and Coping. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *61*(1), 679 – 704. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.093008.100352

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (2011). *Perspectives on Personality* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.

Cascade Behavioral Health Hospital. (2019, April 15). *Symptoms, Signs & Effects of Psychological Trauma*. https://www.cascadebh.com/behavioral/trauma/signs-symptoms-effects/

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development. (2019). *Refugee crisis explained.* https://cafod.org.uk/News/International-news/Refugee-crisis-Q-A

Cattell, R. B. (1943a). The description of personality. I. Foundations of trait measurement. *Psychological Review*, *50*(6), 559 – 594. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0057276

Cattell, R. B. (1943b). The description of personality: basic traits resolved into clusters. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, *38*(4), 476 – 506. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054116

Cattell, R. B. (1945). The Description of Personality: Principles and Findings in a Factor Analysis. *The American Journal of Psychology*, *58*(1), 69 – 90. https://doi.org/10.2307/1417576

Cattell, R. B. (1947). Confirmation and clarification of primary personality factors. *Psychometrika*, *12*(3), 197 – 220. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02289253

Checchi, D., & Pravettoni, G. (2003). Self-esteem and educational attainment. *Departmental Working Papers, Department of Economics, Management and Quantitative Methods at Università degli Studi di Milano.* https://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:mil:wpdepa:2003-30

Cheraghi, M., Oreyzi, H. R., & Farahani, H. (2009). اعتبار بررسی، روایی، تحلیل عوامل و هنجاریابی پرسشنامه هدف در زندگی کرامباف و ماهولیک [Reliability, Validity, Factor Analysis and Normalization of Crumbaugh and Maholick's Questionnaire of Purpose in Life]. *Journal of Psychology*, *12*(4), 396 – 413.

Cherry, K., & Susman, D. (2021, July 18). *Understanding Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development*. Verywell Mind. https://www.verywellmind.com/erik-eriksons-stages-of-psychosocial-development-2795740

Clancy, S. M., & Dollinger, S. J. (1993). Identity, Self, and Personality: I. Identity Status and the Five-Factor Model of Personality. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *3*(3), 227–245. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327795jra0303_2

Cleland, C. E., & Chyba, C. F. (2002). Defining 'life'. *Origins of Life and Evolution of the Biosphere*, *32*, 387 – 393.

Coan, R. W. (1972). Measurable components of openness to experience. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *39*(2), 346 – 346. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0033385

Coan, R. W. (1974). *The Optimal Personality* (1st ed.). Columbia University Press.

Cooper, W. E. (1992). William James's Theory of Self. *The Monist*, *75*(4), 504–520.

Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1976). Age Differences in Personality Structure: a Cluster Analytic Approach. *Journal of Gerontology*, *31*(5), 564 – 570. https://doi.org/10.1093/geronj/31.5.564

Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1985). *The NEO Personality Inventory: Manual Form S and Form R*. Psychological Assessment Resources.

Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1992a). *Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R) and NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) Professional Manual*. Psychological Assessment Resources.

Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1992b). The Five-Factor Model of Personality and Its Relevance to Personality Disorders. *Journal of Personality Disorders*, *6*(4), 343 – 359. https://doi.org/10.1521/pedi.1992.6.4.343

Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1992c). Four ways five factors are basic. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *13*(6), 653 – 665. https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869(92)90236-i

Covenant Counseling. (2021, September 16). *PTSD Treatment Birmingham AL*. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Therapy. https://www.covenantcounsel.com/ptsd-post-traumatic-stress-disorder/

Crocetti, E., Rubini, M., & Meeus, W. (2008). Capturing the dynamics of identity formation in various ethnic groups: Development and validation of a three-dimensional model. *Journal of Adolescence*, *31*(2), 207 – 222. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2007.09.002

Crumbaugh, J. C., & Henrion, R. (1988). The PIL test: Administration, interpretation, uses, theory, and critique. *The International Forum for Logotherapy*, *11*, 76 – 88.

Crumbaugh, J. C., & Maholick, L. T. (1964). An experimental study in existentialism: The psychometric approach to Frankl's concept ofnoogenic neurosis. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *20*(2), 200 – 207. https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679(196404

De Cock, R., Sundin, E., & Mistiaen, V. (2019). The refugee situation as portrayed in news media: A content analysis of Belgian and Swedish newspapers–2015-2017. In L. d'Haenens, W. Joris, & F. Heinderyckx (Eds.). *Images of immigrants and refugees in Western Europe*. (pp.39 – 55). Leuven University Press.

De Levita, D., Neubauer, P. B., & Pick, I. (1976). Development for the treatment of adults. *Bulletin of the International Psycho-Analytic Association*, *57*, 196 – 197.

Demirbaş-Çelik, N., & Korkut-Owen, F. (2018). Personality and Meaning in Life: The Mediating Role of Wellness. *Universal Journal of Psychology*, *6*(3), 94 – 103. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujp.2018.060304

De Raad, B., & Mlačić, B. (2015). The Lexical Foundation of the Big Five Factor Model. In Widiger, T. A., (Ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Five factor model* (pp. 191–216). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199352487.013.12

DeYoung, C. G., Quilty, L. C., & Peterson, J. B. (2007). Between facets and domains: 10 aspects of the Big Five. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *93*(5), 880–896. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.5.880

DeYoung, C. G., Weisberg, Y. J., Quilty, L. C., & Peterson, J. B. (2013). Unifying the Aspects of the Big Five, the Interpersonal Circumplex, and Trait Affiliation. *Journal of Personality*, *81*(5), 465–475. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12020

Dietrich, H., Al Ali, R., Tagay, S., Hebebrand, J., & Reissner, V. (2019). Screening for posttraumatic stress disorder in young adult refugees from Syria and Iraq. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, *90*, 73 – 81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsych.2018.11.001

Dollinger, S. M. (1995). Identity Styles and the Five-Factor Model of Personality. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *29*(4), 475 – 479. https://doi.org/10.1006/jrpe.1995.1028

Dunkel, C. S., & Worsley, S. K. (2016). Does identity continuity promote personality stability? *Journal of Research in Personality*, *65*, 11 – 15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2016.09.001

During, R. W., & Hulverscheidt, N. (2015, September 15). *Flüchtlinge in Berlin: Sportvereine zwischen Engagement und Sorge*. [Refugees in Berlin: sports clubs between commitment and concern.]. Der Tagesspiegel. https://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/fluechtlinge-in-berlin-sportvereine-zwischen-engagement-und-sorge/12319736.html

Elizabeth, F. (2020, November 23). *How We Find Meaning Through Responsibility*. House of McGarey. https://houseofmcgarey.com/blog/2020/5/26/how-we-find-meaning-through-responsibility#:%7E:text=Philosopher%20Friedrich%20Nietzsche%20believes%20that,personal%20meaning%2C%20there%20is%20responsibility.

Emamzadeh, A., & Hagan, E. (2020, February 21). *6 Reasons People Hate Refugees*. Psychology Today. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/finding-new-home/202002/6-reasons-people-hate-refugees

Erikson, E. H. (1950). Growth and crises of the" healthy personality". *Symposium on the healthy personality*. 91 – 146.

Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood & Society* (2nd ed.). W. W. Norton & Co.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (1st ed.). W.W. Norton.

Eshtad, E. (2009). دانشجويان ذهني بهزيستي بر شناختي درماني گروه اثربخشي بررسي [Investigating the effectiveness of cognitive group therapy on students' mental well-being]. Tehran Institute of Psychiatry.

Esping, A. (2008). *The Search for Meaning in Graduate School: Viktor Frankl's Existential Psychology and Academic Life in School of Education*. [PhD Dissertation]. Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology, Indiana University.

Eysenck, H. (1997). *Dimensions of Personality*. Routledge.

Fabry, J. B. & Frankl, V. E. (1969). *The Pursuit of Meaning: Logotherapy Applied to Life. A Guide to the Theory and Application of Viktor E Frankl's Logotherapy*. Beacon Press.

Fadjukoff, P., Pulkkinen, L., & Kokko, K. (2016). Identity Formation in Adulthood: A Longitudinal Study from Age 27 to 50. *Identity*, *16*(1), 8 – 23. https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2015.1121820

Fajkowska, M., & Kreitler, S. (2018). Status of the Trait Concept in Contemporary Personality Psychology: Are the Old Questions Still the Burning Questions? *Journal of Personality*, *86*(1), 5 – 11. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12335

Fazel, M., Wheeler, J., & Danesh, J. (2005). Prevalence of serious mental disorder in 7000 refugees resettled in western countries: a systematic review. *The Lancet*, *365*(9467), 1309 – 1314. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(05)61027-6

Fearon, J. D. (1999). What is Identity (As we now use the word)? *Department of Political Science, Stanford University.*

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. (2016). *Migration, Integration, Asylum - Policy Report 2016.* https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/EMN/Politikberichte/emn-politikbericht-2016-germany.html;jsessionid=2F9D666EE47B46529A71C9E096006754.intranet242

Feil, J., & Hasking, P. (2008). The relationship between personality, coping strategies and alcohol use. *Addiction Research & Theory*, *16*(5), 526 – 537. https://doi.org/10.1080/16066350802025714

Feinstein, S., Poleacovschi, C., Drake, R., & Winters, L. A. (2022). States and Refugee Integration: A Comparative Analysis of France, Germany, and Switzerland. *Journal of International Migration and Integration. 23*, 2167 – 2194. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-021-00929-8

Fleeson, W. (2001). Toward a structure- and process-integrated view of personality: Traits as density distributions of states. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *80*(6), 1011–1027. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.80.6.1011

Fleeson, W., & Jayawickreme, E. (2015). Whole Trait Theory. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *56*, 82–92. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2014.10.009

Flouri, E. (2006). Parental interest in children's education, children's self-esteem and locus of control, and later educational attainment: Twenty-six-year follow-up of the 1970 British Birth Cohort. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *76*(1), 41–55. https://doi.org/10.1348/000709905x52508

Frankfurter Allgemeine. (2018, July 13). *Afghanischer Asylbewerber litt unter psychischen Problemen [Afghan Asylum seekers suffer under psychological problems]*. FAZ.NET. https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/suizid-nach-abschiebung-afghanischer-asylbewerber-litt-unter-psychischen-problemen-15689631.html

Frankl, V. E. (1988). *The Will to Meaning Foundations and Application of Logotherapy*. New York: Meridian Book.

Frankl, V. E (1990). Facing the transitoriness of human existence. *Generations: Journal of the American Society on Aging*, *14*(4), 7-10.

Frankl, V. E. (2000). *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning* (Revised ed.). Basic Books.

Friedman, A. F., Sasek, J., & Wakefield Jr., J. A. (1976). Subjective Ratings of Cattell's 16 Personality Factors. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *40*(3), 301–305. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4003_9

Friedman, H. S., & Schustack, M. W. (1999). *Perspectives on Personality: Classic Theories and Modern Research -- Books a la Carte* (6th ed.). Pearson.

Frisk, M., Kastrati, G., Rosén, J., Månsson, K. N., & Åhs, F. (2021). Gray Matter Differentiation Between Two Subordinate Personality Traits of Extraversion: Enthusiasm and Assertiveness. *bioRxiv*. https://doi.org/10.1101/2021.11.08.467744

Frounfelker, R. L., Mishra, T., Dhesi, S., Gautam, B., Adhikari, N., & Betancourt, T. S. (2020). "We are all under the same roof": Coping and meaning-making among older Bhutanese with a refugee life experience. *Social Science & Medicine, 264*, 113311. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113311

Funder, D.C. & Fast, L.A. (2010). Personality in Social Psychology. In S.T. Fiske, D.T. Gilbert and G. Lindzey. (Eds.). *Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 668 – 697). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470561119.socpsy001018

Galton, F. (1884). Measurement of character. *Fortnightly Review*, *36*, 179–185. https://doi.org/10.1037/11352-058

Gambini, P., & Gonsalves, P. (2018). The search for Identity and Meaning during Adolescence. *Divyadaan*, *29*(3), 275–304.

Garousi Farshi, M. (2001). The new approaches to personality assessment. *Tabriz: Jamee Pajooh*, *155*, 60.

Glaw, X., Kable, A., Hazelton, M., & Inder, K. (2016). Meaning in Life and Meaning of Life in Mental Health Care: An Integrative Literature Review. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, *38*(3), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/01612840.2016.1253804

Goldberg, L. R., & Rosolack, T. K. (1994). The Big Five structure as an integrative framework. An empirical comparison with Eysenck's P-E-N model. In C. F. Halverson, G. A. Kohnstamm, & R. P. Martin (Eds.). *The developing structure of temperament and personality from infancy to adulthood.* Psychology Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315806853

Goldberg, L. R., & Sweeney, D. (1996). The Big-Five Factor Structure as an Integrative Framework: An Analysis of Clarke's AVA Model. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *66*(3), 441–471. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa6603_1

Gomà-i-Freixanet, M. (2001). Prosocial and antisocial aspects of personality in women: a replication study. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *30*(8), 1401–1411. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0191-8869(00)00121-5

Gomà-i-Freixanet, M., Calvo-Rojas, V., & Portell, M. (2019). Personality and psychopathology as predictors of patient-initiated overuse in general practice. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, *120*, 53–59. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2019.03.009

Gomà-i-Freixanet, M., Martínez Ortega, Y., & Arnau, A. (2021). The location of coping strategies within the Alternative Five Factor Model of personality. *New Ideas in Psychology*, *60*, 100834. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.newideapsych.2020.100834

Gower, M. (2021, January 21). *Asylum seekers: the permission to work policy*. House of Commons Library. https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn01908/#:~:text=The%20current%20position%20is%20that%2C%20as%20a%20general,not%20considered%20responsible%20for%20the%20delay%20in%20decision-making.

Grimm, S., & Klimm, F. (2019). Blaming the refugees? Experimental evidence on responsibility attribution. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *72*, 156 – 178. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2019.03.004

Gunthert, K. C., Cohen, L. H., & Armeli, S. (1999). The role of neuroticism in daily stress and coping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *77*(5), 1087 – 1100.

Haase, A., Rohmann, A., & Hallmann, K. (2019). An ecological approach to psychological adjustment: A field survey among refugees in Germany. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *68*, 44 – 54. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2018.10.003

Halama, P. (2005). Relationship between meaning in life and the big five personality traits in young adults and the elderly. *Studia Psychologica*, *47*(3), 167 – 178.

Haller, M., & Müller, B. (2008). Characteristics of Personality and Identity in Population Surveys: Approaches for Operationalising and Localizing Variables to Explain Life Satisfaction. *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology/Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique*, *99*(1), 5 – 33. https://doi.org/10.1177/075910630809900103

Hanewinkel, V., & Oltmer, J. (2017 July 3). *Migration nach Deutschland: Aktuelle Herausforderungen und zukünftige Entwicklungen.* [Migration to Germany: Current challenges and future developments.] Bundeszentrale Für Politische Bildung. https://www.bpb.de/themen/migration-integration/laenderprofile/english-version-country-profiles/262814/migration-to-germany-current-challenges-and-future-developments/

Hatano, K., Sugimura, K., & Klimstra, T. A. (2017). Which came first, personality traits or identity processes during early and middle adolescence? *Journal of Research in Personality*, *67*, 120 – 131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2016.06.014

Heller-Beschnitt, C., & Hungbaur, D. (2021, July 30). *Migration: Wenn integrierten Geflüchteten die Abschiebung droht*. [Migration: When integrated refugees are threatened with deportation.] Augsburger Allgemeine. https://www.augsburger-allgemeine.de/politik/Migration-Wenn-integrierten-Gefluechteten-die-Abschiebung-droht-id59519321.html

Hill, P. L., Allemand, M., & Burrow, A. L. (2010). Identity development and forgivingness: Tests of basic relations and mediational pathways. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *49*(5), 497 – 501. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2010.05.011

Hill, P. L., Allemand, M., Grob, S. Z., Peng, A., Morgenthaler, C., & Käppler, C. (2013). Longitudinal relations between personality traits and aspects of identity formation during adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, *36*(2), 413 – 421. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2013.01.003

Hilton, J. (2016, July 26). *The Perils of Pakistani Migrants Heading to Europe*. Pulitzer Center. https://pulitzercenter.org/id/node/14320

Hollifield, M., Verbillis-Kolp, S., Farmer, B., Toolson, E. C., Woldehaimanot, T., Yamazaki, J., Holland, A., St. Clair, J., & SooHoo, J. (2013). The Refugee Health Screener-15 (RHS-15): development and validation of an instrument for anxiety, depression, and PTSD in refugees. *General Hospital Psychiatry*, *35*(2), 202 – 209. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.genhosppsych.2012.12.002

Hosseininasab, S. D., Poursharifi, H., & Mohammadi, V. (2009). بررسی رابطه بین ویژگیهای شخصیتی با انواع هویت در دانش آموزان دختر سوم راهنمایی شهر تبریز [Investigation to

Determine the Relationship between Personality Traits with the Types of Identity in Third-Grade Female Student's in Tabriz Guidance School]. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, *2*(6), 81 – 98.

Hummel, R. (2017). Ausbildung statt Einbildung. [Education instead of formation]. *MedienJournal*, *5*(3), 1 – 6. https://doi.org/10.24989/medienjournal.v5i3.1119

IBM Corp. (2020). IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 22). Armonk NY: IBM Corp.

Infobae. (2021, August 21). *Greece Builds 25-mile Fence to Fend Off Afghan Refugees*. VOA. https://www.infobae.com/en/2021/08/21/greece-builds-25-mile-fence-to-fend-off-afghan-refugees/

International Rescue Committee (IRC). (2020, September 10). *New Research Finds Lack of Access to Adequate Child Care As One of the Top Barriers to Economic Empowerment for Refugee Women*. IRC. https://www.rescue.org/press-release/new-research-finds-lack-access-adequate-child-care-one-top-barriers-economic

Isıka, S., & Uzbe, N. (2015). Personality Traits and Positive/Negative Affects: An Analysis of Meaning in Life among Adults. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, *15*(3), 587 – 595. https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2015.3.2436

Jamshidi, S., Akbari, B., & Mehregan, B. (2012a, July 2 – 4). Investigation of The Relationship between Creativity and Perseverance and The Relationship between Creativity and Professors Teaching Style. [Paper presentation]. EDULEARN12 Conference, Barcelona, Spain.

Jamshidi, S., Akbari, B., & Mehregan, B. (2012b, July 2 – 4). Investigation of The Relationship between Creativity and Self-Esteem and The Relationship between Creativity and Academic Achievement. [Paper presentation]. EDULEARN12 Conference, Barcelona, Spain.

Jamshidi, S., Tahmasebi, N., & Akbari, B. (2015). Investigation of The Correlation Between Self-Handicapping, Test-Anxiety, and Personality Traits. *Journal of Teaching and Education*, *4*(1), 253 – 262.

Jin, L., Watkins, D., & Yuen, M. (2009). Personality, career decision self-efficacy and commitment to the career choices process among Chinese graduate students. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *74*(1), 47 – 52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2008.10.002

Johansson, M., & Ölund, A. (2017). *Thinking about thinking – a study of anxiety, neuroticism and Need for Cognition* [Master's dissertation, Umeå University].

Jongedijk, R. A., Eising, D. D., van der Aa, N., Kleber, R. J., & Boelen, P. A. (2020). Severity profiles of posttraumatic stress, depression, anxiety, and somatization symptoms in treatment seeking traumatized refugees. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, *266*, 71 – 81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.01.077

Joshaghani, N., Asadzadeh, H., Jarareh, J., Khoshkonesh, A., & Mohammadiarya, A. R. (2015). بررسی رابطه ویژگی های شخصیتی با تعارض و تسهیل شغلی-خانوادگی در بین دبیران در تهران [The Relationship of Personality Traits with Familial-Professional Conflict and Facility among High School Teachers in Tehran]. *Journal of Career & Organizational Counseling*, *7*(22), 108–127.

Kapustin, S. A. (2020). An Existential Criterion for the Normal and Abnormal Personality in the Works of Viktor Frankl. Summary. *Psychology in Russia. State of the Art*, *13*(2) 140 – 153.

Klimstra, T. A. (2012). The dynamics of personality and identity in adolescence. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, *9*(4), 472–484. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2012.673266

Koburtay, T., Refai, D., & Haloub, R. (2020). The role of cultural pressures and group favouritism in shaping Syrian refugees' identity in the Jordanian work environment. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *79*, 24 – 35. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2020.08.002

Kolditz, T. A., & Arkin, R. M. (1982). An impression management interpretation of the self-handicapping strategy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *43*(3), 492–502. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.43.3.492

Kreitler, S. (2018). Personality Traits as Patterns of Meaning Assignment Tendencies. *Journal of Personality*, *86*(1), 55 – 68. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12315

Kroh, M., Brücker, H., Kühne, S., Liebau, E., Schupp, J., Siegert, M. & Trübswetter, P. (2016). *Das Studiendesign der IAB-BAMF-SOEP Befragung von Geflüchteten.* [The Study Design of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees.] [Series C – Data Set]. SOEP. Berlin: DIW Berlin. https://surveyinsights.org/?p=11416

Lahey, B. B. (2009). Public health significance of neuroticism. *American Psychologist*, *64*(4), 241–256. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015309

Landau, I. (2022). *The Oxford Handbook of Meaning in Life*. Oxford University Press.

Landmann, H., Gaschler, R., & Rohmann, A. (2019). What is threatening about refugees? Identifying different types of threat and their association with emotional responses and attitudes towards refugee migration. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *49*(7), 1401–1420. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2593

Larsen, R. J., & Buss, D. M. (2012). *Nortasunaren psikologia: giza izaerari buruzko jakintza-eremuak*. [Personality psychology: areas of knowledge about human nature.] (Vol. 14). Universidad de Deusto.

Lavigne, K. M., Hofman, S., Ring, A. J., Ryder, A. G., & Woodward, T. S. (2013). The personality of meaning in life: Associations between dimensions of life meaning and the Big Five. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *8*(1), 34 – 43. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2012.736527

Leary, M. R., & Tangney, J. P. (2014). *Handbook of self and identity* (2nd ed.). The Guilford Press.

Levesque, R. J. R. (2011). Ego Identity. *Encyclopedia of Adolescence*, 813 – 814. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1695-2_494

Louden, L. L. (2005). *Identity Development Across the Lifespan.* [PhD Dissertation, University of North Texas].

Luyckx, K., Goossens, L., & Soenens, B. (2006). A developmental contextual perspective on identity construction in emerging adulthood: Change dynamics in commitment formation and commitment evaluation. *Developmental Psychology*, *42*(2), 366–380. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.42.2.366

Luyckx, K., Schwartz, S. J., Berzonsky, M. D., Soenens, B., Vansteenkiste, M., Smits, I., & Goossens, L. (2008). Capturing ruminative exploration: Extending the four-

dimensional model of identity formation in late adolescence. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *42*(1), 58 – 82.

Lynn, R., & Martin, T. (1997). Gender Differences in Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Psychoticism in 37 Nations. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *137*(3), 369–373. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224549709595447

Madrazo, V. L. (2014). *Identity, Purpose, and Well-Being Among Emerging Adult Hispanic Women*. [Doctoral dissertation, Florida International University]. https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.2403.2646

Malone, J. C., Liu, S. R., Vaillant, G. E., Rentz, D. M., & Waldinger, R. J. (2016). Midlife Eriksonian psychosocial development: Setting the stage for late-life cognitive and emotional health. *Developmental Psychology*, *52* (3), 496–508. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039875

Marcia, J. E. (1966). Development and validation of ego-identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *3*(5), 551–558. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0023281

Marcia, J. E. (2002). Identity and Psychosocial Development in Adulthood. *Identity*, *2*(1), 7–28. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532706xid0201_02

Marcia, J. E., & Friedman, M. L. (1970). Ego identity status in college women. *Journal of Personality*, *38*(2), 249–263. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1970.tb00007.x

Marshall, M., & Marshall, E. (2012). *Logotherapy Revisited: Review of the Tenets of Viktor E. Frankl's Logotherapy*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Martin, I., Arcarons, A., Amuller, J., Bevelander, P., Emilsson, H., Kalantaryan, S., MacIver, A., Mara, I., Scalettaris, G., Venturini, A., Vidovic, H., Welle, I., Windisch, M., Wolffberg, R., & Zorlu, A. (2016). *From Refugees to Workers*. Migration Policy Centre (MPC) at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute in Florence (EUI). http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu

Martinez, M. C. (2015, September 8). *Migrant vs. refugee: What's the difference*? CNN. https://edition.cnn.com/2015/09/08/world/what-is-difference-migrants-refugees/index.html

Martinez, M., & Marquez, M. (2014, July 16). *What's the difference between immigrant and refugee?* CNN. https://edition.cnn.com/2014/07/15/us/immigrant-refugee-definition/index.html

McCrae, R. R. (2011). Personality Theories for the 21st Century. *Teaching of Psychology*, *38*(3), 209–214. https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628311411785

McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. (1985). Comparison of EPI and psychoticism scales with measures of the five-factor model of personality. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *6*(5), 587–597. https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869(85)90008-x

McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. (1987). Validation of the five-factor model of personality across instruments and observers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *52*(1), 81–90. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.1.81

McCrae, R. R., & Costa Jr, P. T. (2008). The five-factor theory of personality. *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*. *The Guilford Press*.159 – 181.

McCrae, R. R., Costa, P. T., Martin, T. A., Oryol, V. E., Rukavishnikov, A. A., Senin, I. G., Hřebíčková, M., & Urbánek, T. (2004). Consensual validation of personality traits across cultures. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *38*(2), 179–201. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0092-6566(03)00056-4

McCrae, R. R., & Sutin, A. R. (2018). A Five-Factor Theory Perspective on Causal Analysis. *European Journal of Personality*, *32*(3), 151–166. https://doi.org/10.1002/per.2134

McLean, K. C., & Syed, M. U. (2016). *The Oxford handbook of identity development*. (Reprint Ed.). Oxford Library of Psychology.

McLeod, S. (2017, February 5). *Id, Ego and Superego*. SimplyPsychology. https://www.simplypsychology.org/psyche.html

Melchers, M. C., Li, M., Haas, B. W., Reuter, M., Bischoff, L., & Montag, C. (2016). Similar personality patterns are associated with empathy in four different countries. *Frontiers in psychology*, *7*, 1 – 12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00290

Melton, A. M. A., & Schulenberg, S. E. (2008). On the measurement of meaning: Logotherapy's empirical contributions to humanistic psychology. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, *36*(1), 31–44. https://doi.org/10.1080/08873260701828870

Menzies, R. E. (2020). Existential Approaches to Personality. *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences*, 1464–1476. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-24612-3_1466

Mesrabadi, J., Ostovar, N., & Jafarian, S. (2013). بررسی روایی سازه و تشخیصی پرسشنامه معنا در [دانشجویان در زندگی Discriminative and construct validity of meaning in life questionnaire for Iranian students]. *Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *7*(1), 83–90.

Milfont, T. L., & Sibley, C. G. (2012). The big five personality traits and environmental engagement: Associations at the individual and societal level. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *32*(2), 187–195. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2011.12.006

Miller, C. (2004). For What are We Born to Become? *International Journal of Philosophical Practice*, *2*(3), 48–55. https://doi.org/10.5840/ijpp20042316

Monath, H. (2015, October 1). *Asyl in Deutschland: 163.000 Flüchtlinge im September, 290.000 nicht registriert*. [Asylum in Germany: 163,000 refugees in September, 290,000 unregistered.] Der Tagesspiegel. https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/asyl-in-deutschland-163-000-fluechtlinge-im-september-290-000-nicht-registriert/12391766.html

Müller, K., & Schwarz, C. (2021). Fanning the flames of hate: Social media and hate crime. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, *19*(4), 2131-2167. https://doi.org/10.1093/jeea/jvaa045

Nash, M., & Umugwaneza, A. (2015). Refugee women: Resilient and reluctant users of social work services. In M. Pack & J. Cargill (Eds.). *Evidence Discovery and Assessment in Social Work Practice* (pp. 97 – 112). IGI Global.

Nedaeifar, M., Pourhosein, R., & Lavasani, M. G. (2019). پیشبینی خودپنداشت از طریق پنج عامل [شخصیت بزرگ و هویت منزلتهای در دانشجویان Prediction of Self-Concept by Big Five-factors of Personality and Identity Status in Students]. *Rooyesh-e-Ravanshenasi*, *8*(4), 11 – 20.

Negru-Subtirica, O., Pop, E. I., Luyckx, K., Dezutter, J., & Steger, M. F. (2016). The meaningful identity: A longitudinal look at the interplay between identity and meaning in life in adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, *52*(11), 1926–1936. https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000176

Nesterko, Y., Jäckle, D., Friedrich, M., Holzapfel, L., & Glaesmer, H. (2019). Prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and somatisation in recently arrived refugees in Germany: an epidemiological study. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, *29,* 1 – 11. https://doi.org/10.1017/s2045796019000325

Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R. (2020). *Theories of Adolescent Development* (1st ed.). Academic Press.

Nietzsche, F., Pippin, R., & Caro, A. (2006). *Nietzsche: Thus Spoke Zarathustra (Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy)* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press

Nolen-Hoeksema, S., Fredrickson, B., Loftus, G. R., & Lutz, C. (2014). *Introduction to psychology*. Washington: Cengage Learning.

Orenstein, G. A., & Lewis, L. (2021). Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. In *StatPearls [Internet]*. StatPearls Publishing.

Oyserman, D., Elmore, K., & Smith, G. (2012). Self, self-concept, and identity. In M. R. Leary & J. P. Tangney (Eds.). *Handbook of self and identity* (pp. 69–104). The Guilford Press.

Peterson, V. (2021, April 16). *Why Trauma Survivors Can't Just "Let It Go."* The Mighty. https://themighty.com/2018/04/trauma-cant-let-it-go

Pervin, L. A. (2000). The four Cs of personality: Context, consistency, conflict, and coherence. In *Developmental science and the holistic approach* (pp. 261 – 274). Routledge.

Pichl, M. (2017, July 5). *Diskriminierung von Flüchtlingen und Geduldeten*. [Discrimination against refugees and tolerated persons.] SpringerLink. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-658-10976-9_27?error=cookies_not_supported&code=9a1a4395-a3d9-44a5-8531-b9faa2889e16

Power, R. A., & Pluess, M. (2015). Heritability estimates of the Big Five personality traits based on common genetic variants. *Translational Psychiatry*, *5*(7), 604 – 604. https://doi.org/10.1038/tp.2015.96

Rahiminezhad, A., Kazemi, Z., Farahani, H. A., & Aghamohamadi, S. (2011). Purpose in Life and Identity Dimensions as Predictors of Maladaptive Psychological Aspects: A Path Analysis Study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *30*, 1009 – 1013. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.10.196

Rahiminezhad, A., & Mansour, M. (2001). بررسی تحولی هویت و رابطة آن بـا خـود حرمـت و خـود حالـت [Transformation of identity and its relation with کارشناسي دورة دانشـجويان در اضـطراب self-esteem and anxiety degree]. *Journal of Language and Literature*, *46*(158), 477 – 500.

Rahmani, S., Lavasani, M. Gh., & Tanha, Z. (2015). تفاوتهای شخصیتی در شخصیت هیجان و خواهی [Gender differences in Personality and sensation seeking in دانشجویان دانشگاه تهران Tehran University Students]. *Social Psychological Studies*, *13*(3), 153 – 174. https://doi.org/10.22051/JWSPS.2015.2155

Ramos-Grille, I., Gomà-i-Freixanet, M., Aragay, N., Valero, S., & Vallès, V. (2013). The role of personality in the prediction of treatment outcome in pathological gamblers: A follow-up study. *Psychological Assessment*, *25*(2), 599 – 605. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031930

Refugeeum. (2016, June 3). *Inner emptiness*. Refugeeum. https://refugeeum.eu/en/burdens/inner-emptiness/

Reker, G. T. (2005). Meaning in life of young, middle-aged, and older adults: factorial validity, age, and gender invariance of the Personal Meaning Index (PMI). *Personality and Individual Differences*, *38*(1), 71 – 85. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2004.03.010

Rizkalla, N., & Segal, S. P. (2020). Refugee trauma work: Effects on intimate relationships and vicarious posttraumatic growth. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, *276*, 839–847. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.07.054

Roberts, S. B., & Kendler, K. S. (1999). Neuroticism and self-esteem as indices of the vulnerability to major depression in women. *Psychological Medicine*, *29*(5), 1101 – 1109. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0033291799008739

Robila, M. (2018). *Refugees and Social Integration in Europe*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) Division for Social Policy and Development. https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/wp-content/uploads/sites/23/2018/05/Robila_EGM_2018.pdf

Roccas, S., Sagiv, L., Schwartz, S. H., & Knafo, A. (2002). The Big Five Personality Factors and Personal Values. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *28*(6), 789 – 801. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167202289008

Ross, S. R., Canada, K. E., & Rausch, M. K. (2002). Self-handicapping and the Five Factor Model of personality: mediation between Neuroticism and Conscientiousness. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *32*(7), 1173 – 1184. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0191-8869(01)00079-4

Salehi, M. (1995). *A study of Iranian youth and adolescents from the perspective of humanistic psychology*. [Doctoral dissertation, Islamic Azad University, Research and Sciences Campus].

Scheck, S. (2014). *The Stages of Psychosocial Development According to Erik H. Erikson*. (1st ed.). GRIN Verlag.

Scherr, A. (2015). *Diskriminierung: Wie Unterschiede und Benachteiligungen gesellschaftlich hergestellt werden (essentials)* [Discrimination: How Differences and Disadvantages are Societal Created (essentials)] *(German Edition)*. Springer Link.

Schlechter, P., Rodriguez, I. M., Morina, N., Knausenberger, J., Wilkinson, P. O., & Hellmann, J. H. (2021). Psychological distress in refugees: The role of traumatic events, resilience, social support, and support by religious faith. *Psychiatry Research*, *304*, 1 – 26. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2021.114121

Schmitz, N., Kugler, J., & Rollnik, J. (2003). On the relation between neuroticism, self-esteem, and depression: results from the National Comorbidity Survey. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, *44*(3), 169–176. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0010-440x(03)00008-7

Schnell, T. (2009). The Sources of Meaning and Meaning in Life Questionnaire (SoMe): Relations to demographics and well-being. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *4*(6), 483–499. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760903271074

Schnell, T. (2020). *The Psychology of Meaning in Life*. Taylor & Francis.

Schnell, T., & Becker, P. (2006). Personality and meaning in life. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *41*(1), 117 – 129. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2005.11.030

Schulenberg, S. E. (2004). A psychometric investigation of logotherapy measures and the Outcome Questionnaire (OQ-45.2). *North American Journal of Psychology*, *6*(3), 477 – 492.

Schultz, D. P., & Schultz, S. E. (2016). *Theories of Personality* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. P. Zana (Ed.). *Advances in experimental social psychology, 25,* 1 – 65. Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60281-6

Schwartz, S. J., Mullis, R. L., Waterman, A. S., & Dunham, R. M. (2000). Ego Identity Status, Identity Style, and Personal Expressiveness. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *15*(4), 504 – 521. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558400154005

Serafini, T., & Adams, G. R. (2002). Functions of Identity: Scale Construction and Validity. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, *2*, 361 – 389. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532706XID0204_05

Seyffarth, M. (2016, August 19). *Flüchtlinge: Das Märchen von den freien Turnhallen.* [Refugees: The Tale of the free Gyms.] Die Welt. https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article157747952/Das-Maerchen-von-den-freien-Turnhallen.html

Smeekes, A., Verkuyten, M., Çelebi, E., Acartürk, C., & Onkun, S. (2017). Social identity continuity and mental health among Syrian refugees in Turkey. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, *52*(10), 1317 – 1324. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-017-1424-7

Statistics Netherlands. (2018, March 27). *Most Dutch people in favour of receiving refugees*. CBS. https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2018/13/most-dutch-people-in-favour-of-receiving-refugees

Steele, L. (2018, October 4). *Refugees stuck in Greece*. Mission Network News. https://www.mnnonline.org/news/refugees-stuck-in-greece/

Steger, M. F., Frazier, P., Oishi, S., & Kaler, M. (2006). The meaning in life questionnaire: Assessing the presence of and search for meaning in life. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *53*(1), 80 – 93. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.53.1.80

Steger, M. F., Kashdan, T. B., & Oishi, S. (2008). Being good by doing good: Daily eudaimonic activity and well-being. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *42*(1), 22 – 42. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2007.03.004

Stephen, J., Fraser, E., & Marcia, J. E. (1992). Moratorium-achievement (Mama) cycles in lifespan identity development: value orientations and reasoning system correlates. *Journal of Adolescence*, *15*(3), 283 – 300. https://doi.org/10.1016/0140-1971(92)90031-y

Tamás, G. M. (2015, September 21). *The meaning of the refugee crisis*. openDemocracy. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/meaning-of-refugee-crisis/

TAZ. (2021, December 16). *Studie zu Gewalt gegen Geflüchtete: Zwei Vorfälle pro Tag*. [Study on violence against refugees: Two incidents per day.] TAZ Verlags- Und Vertriebs GmbH. https://taz.de/Studie-zu-Gewalt-gegen-Gefluechtete/!5822671/

Terracciano, A., & McCrae, R. R. (2006). Cross-cultural studies of personality traits and their relevance to psychiatry. *Epidemiologia E Psichiatria Sociale*, *15*(3), 176 – 184. https://doi.org/10.1017/s1121189x00004425

Thompson, E. R. (2008). Development and Validation of an International English Big-Five Mini-Markers. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *45*(6), 542 – 548. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2008.06.013

Timotijevic, L., & Breakwell, G. M. (2000). Migration and threat to identity. *Journal of Community & Applied Social*, *10*(5), 355 – 372. https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1298(200009/10)10:5

Tull, M., & Block, D. B. (2020, November 6). *How Trauma-Related OCD Can Be Treated*. Verywell Mind. https://www.verywellmind.com/trauma-ptsd-and-ocd-2797516

Uemura, K. (2018). The Fourth Meaning in Life: With a Discussion of What Viktor E. Frankl Calls Meaning. *Philosophy Study*, *8*(6), 288 – 297. https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5313/2018.06.005

Uher, J. (2013). Personality Psychology: Lexical Approaches, Assessment Methods, and Trait Concepts Reveal Only Half of the Story—Why it is Time for a Paradigm Shift. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, *47*(1), 1–55. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-013-9230-6

UN Refugee Agency. (2015). *Forced Displacement – Global trends in 2015*. UNHCR.org. https://www.unhcr.org

UN Refugee Agency. (2022, June 3). *UNHCR - Global Trends 2019*. UNHCR Flagship Reports. https://www.unhcr.org/flagship- reports/globaltrends/globaltrends2019/

United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees: 1951 Refugee Convention or the Geneva Convention, 28 July 1951 (Article 1.A.2) https://www.unhcr.org/4ca34be29.pdf

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division (1998). *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1*. https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesm/seriesm_58rev1e.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2020, January 3). *Refugees*. UNHCR. https://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c125.html

US Immigration. (2021, August 3). *Refugee Definition*. US Immigration Glossary. https://www.usimmigration.org/glossary/refugee

Verkuyten, M. (2004). Emotional Reactions to and Support for Immigrant Policies: Attributed Responsibilities to Categories of Asylum Seekers. *Social Justice Research*, *17*(3), 293 – 314. https://doi.org/10.1023/b:sore.0000041295.83611.dc

Vogel-Scibilia, S. E., McNulty, K. C., Baxter, B., Miller, S., Dine, M., & Frese, F. J. (2009). The recovery process utilizing Erikson's stages of human development. *Community Mental Health*, *45*(6), 405 – 414. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-009-9189-4

Voynova, S. S., Gabova, S., Lozanova, D., & Lomeva, S. (2017). *Legal Framework, Social Responses and Good Practices to counter Online Hate Speech against Migrants and Refugees*. Sofia Development Association. https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/legal-framework-societal-responses-and-good-practices-counter-online-hate-speech_en

Ward, C., Szabó, G., Schwartz, S. J., & Meca, A. (2021). Acculturative stress and cultural identity styles as predictors of psychosocial functioning in Hispanic Americans. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *80*, 274 – 284. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2020.12.002

Wehrle, K., Klehe, U. C., Kira, M., & Zikic, J. (2018). Can I come as I am? Refugees' vocational identity threats, coping, and growth. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *105*, 83 – 101. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.10.010

Weisberg, Y. J., DeYoung, C. G., & Hirsh, J. B. (2011). Gender Differences in Personality across the Ten Aspects of the Big Five. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *2,* 1 – 11. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00178

Winters, J. (2018, April 10). *Labour market advice and job placement of refugees: Labour market integration is still a long way off*. IAB-Forum. https://www.iab-forum.de/en/labour-market-advice-and-job-placement-of-refugees-labour-market-integration-is-still-a-long-way-off/

Womack, A. (2018, July 12). *Pakistani refugee overcomes injury and trauma on road to Europe*. UNHCR. https://www.unhcr.org/ceu/10174-pakistani-refugee-overcomes-injury-and-trauma-on-road-to-europe.html

Wong, P. T. P. (2007). Meaning management theory and death acceptance. In A. Tomer, G. T. Eliason & P. T. P. Wong (Eds.). *Existential and spiritual issues in death attitudes*. (1st ed., pp. 91-114). Psychology Press.

Wong, P. T. P. (2020). Existential positive psychology and integrative meaning therapy. *International Review of Psychiatry*, *32*(7-8), 565 – 578.

World Medical Association. (2013). World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki: ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects. *Jama*, *310*(20), 2191 – 2194.

Yao, Z. (2020). The Relationship between Neuroticism and Self-Esteem. *The Frontiers of Society, Science and Technology*, *2*(12), 60 – 63. https://doi.org/10.25236/FSST.2020.021210

Yek, M. H., Olendzki, N., Kekecs, Z., Patterson, V., & Elkins, G. (2017). Presence of Meaning in Life and Search for Meaning in Life and Relationship to Health Anxiety. *Psychological Reports*, *120*(3), 383 –390. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294117697084

Appendix A

Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS-2; Bennion & Adams, 1986)

<u>Response Scale</u>:   1 = strongly agree   4 = disagree
                       2 = moderately agree   5 = moderately disagree
                       3 = agree   6 = strongly disagree.

1. I haven't chosen the occupation I really want to get into, and I'm just working at what is available until something better comes along.

2. When it comes to religion I just haven't found anything that appeals and I don't really feel the need to look.

3. My ideas about men's and women's roles are identical to my parents'. What has worked for them will obviously work for me.

4. There's no single "life style" which appeals to me more than another.

5. There are a lot of different kinds of people. I'm still exploring the many possibilities to find the right kind of friends for me.

6. I sometimes join in recreational activities when asked, but I rarely try anything on my own.

7. I haven't really thought about a "dating style." I'm not too concerned whether I date or not.

8. Politics is something that I can never be too sure about because things change so fast. But I do think it's important to know what I can politically stand for and believe in.

9. I'm still trying to decide how capable I am as a person and what work will be right for me.

10. I don't give religion much thought and it doesn't bother me one way or the other.

11. There's so many ways to divide responsibilities in marriage, I'm trying to decide what will work for me.

12. I'm looking for an acceptable perspective for my own "life style", but haven't really found it yet.

13. There are many reasons for friendship, but I choose my close friends on the basis of certain values and similarities that I've personally decided on.

14. While I don't have one recreational activity I'm really committed to, I'm experiencing numerous leisure outlets to identify one I can truly enjoy.

15. Based on past experiences, I've chosen the type of dating relationship I want now.

16. I haven't really considered politics. It just doesn't excite me much.

17. I might have thought about a lot of different jobs, but there's never really been any question since my parents said what they wanted.

18. A person's faith is unique to each individual. I've considered and reconsidered it myself and know what I can believe.

19. I've never really seriously considered men's and women's roles in marriage. It just doesn't seem to concern me.

20. After considerable thought I've developed my own individual viewpoint of what is for me an ideal "life style" and don't believe anyone will be likely to change my perspective.

21. My parents know what's best for me in terms of how to choose my friends.

22. I've chosen one or more recreational activities to engage in regularly from lots of things and I'm satisfied with those choices.

23. I don't think about dating much. I just kind of take it as it comes.

24. I guess I'm pretty much like my folks when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and such.

25. I'm not really interested in finding the right job, any job will do. I just seem to flow with what is available.

26. I'm not sure what religion means to me. I'd like to make up my mind but I'm not done looking yet.

27. My ideas about men's and women's roles have come right for my parents and family. I haven't seen any need to look further.

28. My own views on a desirable life style were taught to me by my parents and I don't see any need to question what they taught me.

29. I don't have any real close friends, and I don't think I'm looking for one right now.

30. Sometimes I join in leisure activities, but I really don't see a need to look for a particular activity to do regularly.

31. I'm trying out different types of dating relationships. I just haven't decided what is best for me.

32. There are so many different political parties and ideals. I can't decide which to follow until I figure it all out.

33. It took me a while to figure it out, but now I really know what I want for a career.

34. Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right and wrong for me.

35. I've spent some time thinking about men's and women's roles in marriage and I've decided what will work best for me.

36. In finding an acceptable viewpoint to life itself, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self exploration.

37. I only pick friends my parent would approve of.

38. I've always liked doing the same recreational activities my parents do and haven't ever seriously considered anything else.

39. I only go out with the type of people my parents expect me to date.

40. I've thought my political beliefs through and realize I can agree with some and not other aspects of what my parents believe.

41. My parents decided a long time ago what I should go into for employment and I'm following through their plans.

42. I've gone through a period of serious questions about faith and can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.

43. I've been thinking about the roles that husbands and wives play a lot these days, and I'm trying to make a final decision.

44. My parents' views on life are good enough for me, I don't need anything else.

45. I've had many different friendships and now I have a clear idea of what I look for in a friend.

46. After trying a lot of different recreational activities I've found one or more I really enjoy doing by myself or with friends.

47. My preferences about dating are still in the process of developing. I haven't fully decided yet.

48. I'm not sure about my political beliefs, but I'm trying to figure out what I can truly believe in.

49. It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career.

50. I attend the same church as my family has always attended. I've never really questioned why.

51. There are many ways that married couples can divide up family responsibilities. I've thought about lots of ways, and not I know exactly how I want it to happen for me.

52. I guess I just kind of enjoy life in general, and I don't see myself living by any particular viewpoint to life.

53. I don't have any close friends. I just like to hang around with the crowd.

54. I've been experiencing a variety of recreational activities in hope of finding one or more I can really enjoy for some time to come.

55. I've dated different types of people and know exactly what my own "unwritten rules" for dating are and who I will date.

56. I really have never been involved in politics enough to have made a firm stand one way or the other.

57. I just can't decide what to do for an occupation. There are so many possibilities.

58. I've never really questioned my religion. If it's right for my parents it must be right for me.

59. Opinions on men's and women's roles seem so varied that I don't think much about it.

60. After a lot of self-examination I have established a very definite view on what my own life style will be.

61. I really don't know what kind of friend is best for me. I'm trying to figure out exactly what friendship means to me.

62. All of my recreational preferences I got from my parents and I haven't really tried anything else.

63. I date only people my parents would approve of.

64. My folks have always had their own political and moral beliefs about issues like abortion and mercy killing and I've always gone along accepting what they have.

Appendix B

Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ; Steger et al., 2006)

MLQ Please take a moment to think about what makes your life feel important to you. Please respond to the following statements as truthfully and accurately as you can, and also please remember that these are very subjective questions and that there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer according to the scale below:

Absolutely Untrue	Mostly Untrue	Somewhat Untrue	Can't Say True or False	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Absolutely True
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. _____ I understand my life's meaning.

2. _____ I am looking for something that makes my life feel meaningful.

3. _____ I am always looking to find my life's purpose.

4. _____ My life has a clear sense of purpose.

5. _____ I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful.

6. _____ I have discovered a satisfying life purpose.

7. _____ I am always searching for something that makes my life feel significant.

8. _____ I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life.

9. _____ My life has no clear purpose.

10. _____ I am searching for meaning in my life.

MLQ syntax to create Presence and Search subscales:
Presence = 1, 4, 5, 6, & 9-reverse-coded
Search = 2, 3, 7, 8, & 10

Appendix C

Purpose in Life Questionnaire test (PIL; Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964)

Directions: For each of the following statements, circle the number that would be most nearly true for you. The numbers extend from one extreme feeling to the opposite on the other side. At the end of the test, you can see how to score your test.

1. I am usually:
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
   (completely bored)   (exuberant, enthusiastic)

2. Life to me seems:
   7   6   5   4   3   2   1
   (always exciting)   (completely routine)

3. In life, I have:
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
   (no goals or desires)   (very clear goals & desires)

4. My personal existence is:
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
   (meaningless, without purpose)   (purposeful, meaningful)

5. Every day is:
   7   6   5   4   3   2   1
   (constantly new & different)   (exactly the same)

6, If I could choose, I would:
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
   (prefer never to have been born)   (like nine more lives just like this one)

7. After retiring, I would:
   7   6   5   4   3   2   1
   (do exciting things I've always wanted to do)   (loaf around completely)

8. In achieving life goals I have:
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
   (made no progress)   (progressed to complete fulfillment)

9. My life is:
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
   (empty, filled with despair)   (running over with exciting good things)

10. If I should die today, I would feel that my life has been:
   7   6   5   4   3   2   1
   (very worthwhile)   (completely worthless)

11. In thinking of my life, I:
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7
   (often wonder why I exist)   (always see a reason for my being here)

12. As I view the world in relation to my life, the world:

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

    (completely confuses me)   (fits meaningfully with my life)

13. I am a:

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

    (very irresponsible person)   (very responsible person)

14. Concerning one's freedom to make their own choices, I believe a person is:

    7   6   5   4   3   2   1

    (absolutely free to make all life's choices)   (completely bound by limitations)

15. With regard to death, I am:

    7   6   5   4   3   2   1

    (prepared & unafraid)   (unprepared & scared)

16. With regard to suicide, I have:

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

    (thought of it seriously as a way out)   (never given it a second thought)

17. I regard my ability to find a meaning, purpose or mission in life as:

    7   6   5   4   3   2   1

    (very great)   (practically none)

18. My life is:

    7   6   5   4   3   2   1

    (in my control)   (out of my control)

19. Facing my daily tasks is:

    7   6   5   4   3   2   1

    (a source of pleasure/satisfaction)   (a painful & boring experience)

20. I have discovered:

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7

    (no purpose or mission in life)   (clear-cut goals and a purpose in life)

Now go back and add up all the numbers you have circled. What does your score add up to? The lowest score possible is 20 and the highest is 140. The average college student, who we would consider as someone having a purpose in life scores 108. Now, you are younger and some of the things asked may not apply to you. If your score is below 80, then it is time you start dreaming about your future and thinking about how you can find purpose. If you scored a 1 or 2 on the following questions: 6, 9, 11, or 16, then please bring this in to your school counselor. I'm worried about you.