Conceptions of National Identity and Attitudes Toward Immigrants

A study about if national identity and attitudes towards immigrants correlates

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Abstract

This study aims to look at the conceptions of national identity and how this is linked to attitudes towards immigrants. Eight respondents were asked in semi-structured interviews about their conceptions of their national identity and their views about immigrants. Finally they were asked about if they thought that national identity and attitudes towards immigrants had any correlation.

The empirical data were analyzed through a thematic analysis, which means identifying patterns (themes). The findings were then analyzed with Byrne’s theory of conceptions of national identity as analytical framework. The result shows that there are different conceptions of the national identity and that the respondents overall held a moderate balance between the dimensions. From this study it can be seen that there is a correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants based on Byrne’s theory since a moderate balance between the dimensions did create neutral to positive attitudes towards immigrants, while an unequal balance created extremely negative or positive attitudes towards immigrants. The respondents who had neutral to extremely positive attitudes towards immigrants tended to be able to see a correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants in relation to others. While the respondents who were extremely negative towards immigrants tended to not have this understanding of the correlation and did not see a correlation neither for themselves or others.

Keywords: National Identity, Attitudes towards immigrants, Sweden, Swedish, Conceptions of national identity
# Table of contents

Acknowledgement .................................................................................................................... 2  
Abstract ...................................................................................................................................... 3  
Table of contents .......................................................................................................................... 4  
List of Abbreviations .................................................................................................................. 6  
List of Tables and Figures ........................................................................................................... 7  

1. Introduction................................................................................................................................ 8  
   1.1 Research problem and Problem Formulation ........................................................................ 8  
   1.2 Research purpose .................................................................................................................. 9  
   1.3 Research questions ............................................................................................................... 10  
   1.4 Frameworks .......................................................................................................................... 10  
      1.4.1 Conceptual Framework ................................................................................................... 10  
      1.4.2 Analytical Framework ................................................................................................... 10  
   1.5 Methodology/Method ............................................................................................................ 10  
   1.6 Structure of the thesis .......................................................................................................... 11  
   1.7 Limitations and Delimitations ............................................................................................. 11  
   1.8 Ethical considerations .......................................................................................................... 12  

2. Theory and Literature Review .................................................................................................. 13  
   2.1 Literature review ................................................................................................................ 13  
      2.1.1 Previous studies on attitudes towards immigrants .......................................................... 13  
      2.1.2 The relation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants .................. 15  
   2.2 Analytical Framework ......................................................................................................... 19  

3. Methodological framework ....................................................................................................... 23  
   3.1 Research Method ............................................................................................................... 23  
   3.2. Selection of Research Methods ....................................................................................... 23  

4. Findings and Analysis ............................................................................................................... 26  
   4.1 Being Swedish – Findings and Analysis .............................................................................. 26  
      4.1.1 Being Swedish – Findings ............................................................................................. 26  
      4.1.2 Being Swedish – Analysis ........................................................................................... 28  
   4.2 Attitudes towards immigrants – Findings .......................................................................... 30
4.2.1 Attitudes towards immigrant – Findings – Positive aspects

4.2.2 Attitudes towards immigrants – Findings – Negative Aspects

4.3 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants – Findings

4.3.1 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants – My findings

4.3.2 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants – The respondents answers – Findings

4.4 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants – Analysis

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusions

5.2 Discussion

References

Books

Articles

Internet sources
List of Abbreviations

ISSP - International Social Survey Programme
List of Tables and Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table/Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1. The Dimensions of National Identity</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 1. Dimensions of National Identity</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2. Positive Aspects</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3. Negative Aspects</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4. Correlation between National Identity and Attitudes Towards immigrants</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

1.1 Research problem and Problem Formulation

Globally, there were 232 million international migrants in 2013 (UN, Departments of Economic & Social Affairs, International Migration Report 2013. An international migrant are equivalent either to foreign-born or foreign citizens in this context (Ibid.). In Sweden there were 1.6 million people who were foreign born in 2014 (Migrationsinfo, 2015).

People migrate for many reasons. Castles & Miller (2009) note that people have always migrated but there has been an increase in people migrating since 1945 and this in terms of international migration. The fact that people now can move around more freely does not answer the question of why people migrate; accessibility is a factor, but other reasons can be because they lack work and emigrate to other countries for better work opportunities; violent conflicts around the world have seen millions of people flee from their countries of origin and catastrophes have made people flee and start their life somewhere else in the world (Castles & Miller, 2009).

The riots in France 2005 and in Denmark 2008 reminds of the dilemmas associated with immigration, integration and belonging. Sweden as a country is not seen a as classic country of immigration, if you compare with the U.S or Canada (Lödén, 2008). However, in the last 40 years the Swedish society has seen a change in the ethnic composition and has started to look like other countries such as Canada or Australia, in the sense that Sweden has become a country of immigration. In the 1960s Sweden was still a rather ethnically homogenous country, but the workforce immigration from 1950 and through to the 1970 and asylum immigration from the 1980 drastically changed this and by the mid 2000 approximately 20 percent of the nine million population is of foreign origin. Sweden is not a unique country when it comes to this kind of recent migration but shares it with other European countries, like Germany. The percentage of the population born in a foreign country in Sweden has risen and in 2006 it was 12.1 percent. Compared to other more traditional countries of immigration such as the U.K (9.1), Spain (11.1), the Netherlands (10.1) and the U.S (12.9), Sweden has a quite high percentage (United Nation, UN’s Population Division, Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs, International Migration, 2006).

A national identity starts to exist when a nation is considered to be a relevant object for human experience. The nation can be imagined in multiple ways, such as an ethnic entity, as a territorial
entity, as a political entity or as a cultural entity (Finell, Olakivi, Liekind, Lipsanen, 2013). Several studies claim that the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants correlates (Esses et al 1998; Facchini & Mayda, 2009; Hjerm 2009; Mayda 2006; O’Rourke & Sinnott 2006; Sandovici et al 2012). As argued by Finell et al (2013) the different scholars named above choose to see the nation in different ways and look at how individuals’ attitudes are shaped through different structures e.g. political, social and economic.

All of these studies have in some way looked at attitudes towards immigrants and how they are created in different ways. The studies show that there is something to examine in how individuals shape their attitudes towards immigrants. There are however some issues that need to be raised. First, all of these studies are of the quantitative kind. That is positive since you can make generalization of a whole population or a country, or even do cross-country studies. The problem is then that the depth of the problem with attitudes towards immigrants is not explored. The root of the problem can be better explored with qualitative methods. Second, all of these studies relate attitudes toward immigrant with structures e.g., political, social, or economic. This is also a good way to see where the biggest issues within immigration and integration lies, but it does not explain where the sentiments come from. Is it possible to understand attitudes towards immigrants without taking the political, social or economic structures into account, and instead focus on conceptions of national identity as explanation to these attitudes?

This study is going to focus on the conceptions of national identity and attitudes towards immigrants and look at the relationship between the two. Studies that have been made so far looks at the overarching societal perspective and not at how the subjective view of conceptions of the national identity might create different attitudes towards immigrants. Instead of taking the overarching perspective this study aims to explore why and how national identity is important to people and how this might be correlated with certain attitudes towards immigrants.

1.2 Research purpose.

The purpose of this study is to achieve a greater understanding about the relationship between the conceptions of national identity and attitudes towards immigrants.

Empirically this is studied in Sweden, i.e. focusing on conceptions of national identity and attitudes to immigrant in Sweden, focusing on young people between ages 20-30.
1.3 Research questions

Are the different conceptions of national identity?

Is there a correlation between conceptions of national identity and attitudes towards immigrants according to the respondents?

1.4 Frameworks

1.4.1 Conceptual Framework

Two concepts, national identity and immigrant, are important in this study. National identity is the first important concept and can be seen in many different ways. National identity is defined as people who describe themselves as a belonging group and a nation and are an imagined political community – imagined both as inherently limited and sovereign (Anderson, 1991 [1983]:6). The imagined community means that the members of a nation define themselves as members of this nation and with this comes a strong image of a national identity.

The second concept is immigrant and the definition used in this study is: a person who leaves one country to settle permanently in another (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013). This is an important concept to the study because it divides people into groups; the people who have their roots in the country and the people who come to a country and live there but have their roots elsewhere.

1.4.2 Analytical Framework

Byrne’s (2011) dimensions of national identity will be used as an analytical framework in this study. Three dimensions (ethnic/cultural, civic, and liberal identity) are used to measure high, moderate and low levels of identity. It is the balance between the dimensions that will be used to see how different conceptions of national identity can create different attitudes towards immigrants. Byrne was used since the national identity is treated as a whole unity and it is the nuances and the sections that make the whole, instead of taking the national identity and split it up into different sections.

1.5 Methodology/Method

This study will be conducted as a case study with a qualitative approach, since the purpose is to go into depth with the data and not to generalize. An abductive approach will be used, as this case
study seeks to look at and interpret a case from an overall hypothetical pattern (Byrne's theory as analytical framework) and then look at new cases (interviews) to explain and reinterpret the phenomenon. Abduction tries to give understanding to the problem by looking at the underlying pattern (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2007, 55).

To be able to answer the research questions and purpose, qualitative semi-structured interviews with eight young adults will be conducted. Six young adults who are studying at university level and two who do not have a university degree were interviewed. The advantage with semi-structured interviews is that the conservation does not get focused around presided questions. Magne Holme and Krohn Solvang (1997:101) argue that qualitative interviews can contribute to increase the information value and form a platform for a deeper and more complete perception about the phenomena studied.

The findings will be analyzed with thematic analysis, which is a method for identifying and analyzing patterns in qualitative way (Braun & Clarke 2013:120).

1.6 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into five different chapters. The first chapter has introduced the study, the analytical framework and methods that will be used. It also introduces limitations/delimitations and ethical considerations. The second chapter goes into theory, i.e. the conceptual and analytical framework, as well as a literature review of related research. The third chapter is about methodology and methods including how and why the methods were chosen. In the fourth chapter the findings and analysis of the study is presented. The fifth and final chapter is a conclusion of the study and possible recommendations of future research.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitations

This study is delimited to young adults because they are the future and will have a great say in what way different cultures and people will work together and be interlinked. Another reason is that the older generation may not have been integrated with people from other countries at a young age and that is why it is relevant to see what younger generations say, that have been more exposed to multiculturalism. The limitation with this choice is that I will not be able to get a full spectrum and a sample that represent the whole population and will not be able to generalize.

The study is delimited to two cities (Växjö and Halmstad). The respondents are studying, working
or are unemployed. I have chosen to only use ethnic background as a factor when selecting respondents. If there is respondents who does not feel that they have a special national identity, this can make them more open minded, which can affect the results. If there is an unequal balance between the respondents in identity, the results can be different depending on the compositions of the respondents. Factors such as social and economic background are not in focus of this study, as many other studies have already focused on that, as discussed above.

1.8 Ethical considerations

I have taken into account that the study concerns a very hard and sensitive subject. This means that people may not want to talk so freely about their sense of national identity but most important how they think about immigrants. One way of handling this sensitivity is to treat all respondents anonymously, which has been done in this study.
2. Theory and Literature Review

In this chapter previous research on related topics will be reviewed and the analytical framework used in the study will be explained and defined. The chapter will start with a short review of previous studies of attitudes towards immigrants and which factors have been considered. Thereafter follows a review of studies that look at the relation between national identity and attitudes toward immigrants. The chapter ends by presenting the analytical framework used in this study.

2.1 Literature review

2.1.1 Previous studies on attitudes towards immigrants

Previous studies on how attitudes towards immigrants are created all look at it from the perspective of three structures; economic, social and political. In relation to the economic structure (Facchini and Mayda, 2009; Mayda 2006; O’Rourke and Sinnott 2006) the results show that there are certain circumstances that make people create anti-immigrant attitudes, such as that high-income individuals are struck more by unskilled immigration, but only if the taxes are raised to maintain per capita transfers are unchanged. Second, the individuals that are at the bottom of the distributions will be more affected with unskilled immigration if the tax rates are kept at a constant level and the adjustments is done by a reduction in the per capita transfers. Third, individuals with high-income are more opposed to immigration where immigration is unskilled and will become a net burden to the welfare state and the data obtained suggests that it is the opposite when migration is skilled. If that would be the case the correlation between pro-immigration and income is positive, the situation would be that migrants are perceived as net contributors to the welfare state. Finally, unskilled labor are most likely to be a net burden, the same with young immigrants who have been portrayed to be the reason why the conditions in welfare states are deteriorating in countries with aging populations (Facchini and Mayda, 2009). It is clear that this is important since people are very occupied with how to manage to support and protect themselves and their loved ones. Essentially the skilled immigrants can be seen as a threat to the native people and the unskilled as a burden to the welfare system and if the receiving country is struggling with the economy, the anti-immigrant sentiments will be higher.
In terms of the social structure, both Hjerm (2009) and Esses et al (1998) look at group dynamics and both at real and perceived threat that immigrants can pose for the majority. If the minority group(s) goal are not compatible with the majority group´s goals there will be a conflict and the majority will perceive the minority group as a threat and will try to eliminate that threat, which is over resources. The importance of Esses et al (1998) study is to show that if you create an image of the minority group as a threat, it will be enough to create negative attitudes towards immigrants. Hjerm (2009) study is relevant in relation to this study since it takes place in Sweden and explains how the Swedish municipality system works and are relatively new so the hypotheses and results can be applicable for this study as well since the system has not changed since 2009. Hjerm (2009) bring up some good points. First, in the municipalities with a high proportion of foreign-born population people are have less anti-immigrant attitudes, not the opposite and it does not matter in the political context either. Second and most importantly, in the poor municipalities, the economic context do matter where there is a large immigrant population. This means that the people that have a low status in the majority group will be threatened by immigrants. In the political structure, Sandovici et al (2012) looks at a very important angle, the one of that the governments´ stance effect the population and especially people that are interested in politics. They also bring up the important topic of media and the roll of the mass media when covering news.

All of these studies have in some way looked at attitudes towards immigrants and how they are created in different ways. These studies show that there is something to examine in how individuals shapes their attitudes toward immigrants. There are however some issues that I feel need to be addressed. First, all of these studies are of the quantitative kind. That is positive since you can make generalization of a whole population or a country, or even do cross-country studies. The problem is then that the depth of the problem is lost and all you have is conclusion of a population and you still do not know the root of the problem in a qualitative way. Second, all of these studies relate attitudes towards immigrant with a structure e.g. political, social, or economic. This is also a good way to see were the biggest issues with immigration and integration lies, but the assumption in this study is that there might be other factors influencing attitudes to immigrants, that does not have to do with the political, social or economic context, such as conceptions of national identity. In this study a qualitative approach is used and the aim is to see if there is a correlation between conceptions national identity and attitudes toward immigrants.
2.1.2 The relation between national Identity and attitudes towards immigrants

The literature regarding national identity is immense. It has been a heavily discussed topic for a long time. Brubaker (1992, 168-73, 1996) started to look at the different conceptions of national identity through the nation itself. He built this on the German “Kulturnation”, which means nation defined by its culture, and the French “Staatsnation”, which in simpler words means civic nation. Brubaker used two conceptions, ethnic and civic, but these were only defined at a national level. The theory has since then been expanded and looked at the conceptions of national identity (ethnic and civic) within countries (Heath and Tilley, 2005; Knudsen, 1997; Lödén 2008).

Knud Knudsen (1997) has in his article analyzed possible links between aspects of national identity and xenophobia in a Scandinavian context. He uses four concepts; national identity, national chauvinism, regime legitimacy, and xenophobia.

National identity is an assumption about common perceptions or definitions about who we are as members of a nation state, Swedes, Americans, and Danish etc. These images are socially constructed and are seen as a historically and culturally determined phenomena. The national identity is likely to show some stability, but can be changed over time, and can be politically created from both above and below. The national identity is normally viewed as the typical pattern of the current self-definition characterizing a nation’s population, compared to others. This can also been seen at an individual level, and can vary within the nation, where some are more close to the typical pattern and others are not. The concept of national identity can be encompassed into two theoretically different, but possibly empirically linked aspects.

First, national chauvinism contains shared images of the nation’s general standing. This involves that people are considering themselves as a member of the nation and the degree to which they see their nation’s qualities as higher or superior to others, which can be associated with exclusion. Second, the other side of the scale is concerned with support for the basic social and political system, which includes support for the country’s political democratic intuitions, regime legitimacy, which can be associated with inclusion. Knudsen links these two ideas to attitudes towards immigrants, which in this context is called xenophobia, (which is negative attitudes towards immigrants), and discuss how the two aspects can affect xenophobia in different ways. High
national chauvinism is likely to result in negative attitudes (i.e. xenophobia), while strong regime legitimacy is likely to result in positive attitudes (Knudsen, 1997:223-225).

Knudsen uses data from the National Identity module of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) which is a collaboration between different nations conducting surveys covering topics (in this case the National identity Module from 1995) and look at data from Sweden and Norway. The results shows that Swedes are less chauvinistic and have less regime legitimacy, which means that they are less xenophobic. In contrast to Norwegians that are characterized by higher xenophobia, since they are more chauvinistic. According to Knudsen these results have has limited methodological validity and are in need for a deeper analysis in the future (Knudsen, 1997: 228-239).

Similarly Lödén´s (2008) study focuses on superordinate national identity, immigration and the democratic state. He uses national identity as his core concept and from that develops it into two categories, an inclusive and an exclusive.

The first, is an identity taking common destinies, real or imagined, as the point of reference and tends to focus on lineage and ethnicity. This type of national identity can be tied to exclusion and are used to describe one type of citizenship. The criteria for the exclusive type of national identity can be that you have to be born in the country of residence, have lived there for the most of your life, and follow the dominant religious faith.

The second identity is taking common values as its point of reference and tends to focus on the principle of territory. This is connected to inclusion and describes the other type of citizenship. The inclusive form of national identity sees speaking the dominant language, respecting the country’s political institutions and laws, and feeling as a member of the country you live in as important factors. A person can have multiple identities at the same time, personal and social. These can be more or less overlapping, depending on the emphasis and situation (Lödén, 2008:259-260).

Lödén's study shows that a superordinate national identity that is inclusive can lead to decreased intergroup conflict and create a sense of belonging. In his study, which includes both Swedish and non-Swedish students, both groups expressed similar attachment to inclusion, but it was not enough to make the non-Swedes feel Swedish in the same way as those who were Swedes. Those who want to be Swedes and those who are Swedes agreed that identification as “Swedish” does not comes
from any imaginations of any “naturalness” of national belonging, which comes from democracy (Lödén, 2008: 260-263).

Heath & Tilley also (2005) focus on the relationship between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants. More precisely on the distinction between two conceptions of the nation in Britain, *ethnic* and *civic*, and the consequences these two have for xenophobia and multiculturalism. *Ethnic* conceptions of the nation, focus on the emphasis on bloodlines, ancestry and cultural assimilation, which is more or less fixed characteristics, at birth or during early socialization. The people who subscribe themselves to an ethnic conception of national identity are concerned with that people have to been born in the country or have been living in the country for most of their life, and are more likely to have weaker support for multiculturalism and have higher worries about immigration. The *civic* conceptions of the nation means that aspects such as respect for political institutions, having a national citizenship, and speaking the language is more important. These characteristics are achievable for immigrants, and therefore those who subscribe to a civic conception are more likely to be open towards immigrants (Heath & Tilley, 2005:119-120).

They are using data from the 2003 ISSP (National Identity Module) and using different variables to see if people subscribe to the ethnic or civic conceptions, or the possibility of neither. Results show that people from Britain are not that welcoming to new immigrants, but once the immigrants are in the country the British seem to be more tolerant. Some British people still think that the ethnic conceptions of national identity are important and these people are more negative towards immigrants. But the result shows that many British people are in both the civic and ethnic camp and also a high number of people are in the civic group, which means that there are both civic and ethnic conceptions in the British society, as well as those who does not subscribe to neither.

The studies reviewed above both use the same two basic conceptions of national identity, on the one hand focusing on ethnicity and on the other hand on territory (Lödén, 2008:258-259). The two different concepts in Knudsen (1997) and Lödén (2008) are dealing with the same issue, which is national identity and immigration. These two are then measurements on how a person regards against their country and also how they regard other people: How important is these two when talking about being truly from e.g. Britain. So these two concepts, *ethnic* and *civic*, catch and entail both of Knudsen’s (1997) and Lödén’s (2008) concepts into these two concepts. In the role of how people distinguish the importance of these, three groups can be formed. First, people who believe
that both ethnic and civic aspects are important. Second, people who believe that civic but not ethnic are important. Finally, third, were the people do not feel that neither of these two aspects are important aspects to be truly British (in this case) (Heath & Tilley, 2005). These have then been developed further, which is described below and this is the analytical framework that has been chosen for this study.

In line with this, Byrne (2011) sees these two conception as important but takes it a step further and incorporates a *liberal dimension*. She warns about using the previous theories, since they are seeing the conceptions as distinct and rigid. Even if it is a powerful theoretical tool, in the analysis, important and nuanced insight might be lost, since you are putting a nation into one or the other categories. Instead she is using these three conceptions of national identity (*ethnic/cultural, civic*, and *liberal*) in a more detailed way, where the different combinations or syntheses of the national identity plays a bigger role, instead of just putting the national identity into two categories. This is elaborated further in the section 2.2 Analytical framework.

Knudsen's (1997) view on national identity is rather static and rigid in that the national identity is seen as a definition of how we see the nation state. Even if it can vary on the individual level and change over time is it only to the degree that you are more close to the typical pattern of your country or not. The two aspects are just reflection of how the population stands in connection with the nation state. That is if they think their nation’s qualities are better than others or that they support the basic social and political system, such as human rights. Lödén (2008) and Heath & Tilley (2005) argues that the national identity is a more personal and subjective view of the nation. It is the development that it is the conceptions of the national identity and the national identity itself that determines views of immigrants. The use of two conceptions ethnic and civic in analysis within countries instead of by countries and it makes the analysis wider and more complex. It can be used to see variations within countries and across countries instead of just comparing countries. This framework is still very rigid and people can only be put in one of the categories which make the framework very static in the sense of that people can only be viewed as one personality and not be in multiple categories at the same time. Byrne (2011) states that there is a need for one more conception, the *liberal* and develops the framework further and adds more depth to it. The conceptions are used not only to put people in categories but to examine the balance (*high, moderate, low*) between the three dimensions. It is both the support for each dimension of national
identity and the support of each dimension vis-á-vis each other that is important in this framework, which makes it multidimensional and more nuanced.

All of these studies show that there is a need to study why people have different attitudes towards immigrants. These studies have all been conducted on a country level and have made conclusions about populations. It might be useful to draw general conclusions and to compare different countries to see the difference between them. The problem is that if you only look for the view of the whole population the depth and underlying meaning disappear. This is what this study is doing, looking at the national identity and exploring how it might be related to people's attitudes towards immigrants.

2.2 Analytical Framework

As stated above this study takes a qualitative approach and therefore searches for the underlying meanings or patterns, so the choice of analytical framework is in line with that approach.

Byrne (2011) takes on national identity and attitudes towards immigrants in a more open and different way than previous scholars (Heath & Tilley 2005; Knudsen, 1997; Lödén 2008). She uses the civic and ethnic conceptions of national identity but add one more dimension, liberal, since she is looking at national identity and attitudes toward immigrants in the U.S.A.

The American identity has throughout history been shaped by different historical periods where there has been shifts from an emphasis on more liberal and civic orientations of national identity to an ethnic/cultural understanding of national identity, such as political shocks or wars. This can change the realignment of the way that the dimensions are emphasized by the general public, which means that the meaning of national identity is susceptible to e.g. political shocks or major changes such as war. The 9/11 was a huge shock to the political system for the United States and Byrne has therefore focused in on conceptions of national identity pre- and post-9/11, which showed different meanings of national identity and a shift from a more civic and liberal orientation to an ethnic/cultural understanding of national identity. She therefore looks at the ISSP National Identity I and II modules collected in 1996 and 2004.

The ethnic/cultural conception of national identity emphasizes bloodlines, ancestry and cultural traits as important to be a member of the in-group. Importance on country of birth, extended residence and dominant religious faith is part of being in the in-group, which is usually confirmed
by birth or extended residence. If in-group members subscribe to a strong ethnic national identity this person will see cultural conformity and national unity as important and be less tolerant to cultural pluralism and individual rights.

The ethnic/cultural dimension can be seen as a less consensual set of criteria for national membership, since the identity is expected to be associated with demands for a unified culture. This is because people who identify with the ethnic/cultural see common cultural and linguistic elements as important, meaning that the out-group members must culturally assimilate to become a part of the in-group.

Civic conceptions of national identity are based “in a common loyalty to a territorially defined state and rooted in a set of political rights, duties, and values shared by citizens of that state, regardless of their ancestry and of the nonpolitical aspects of their cultural heritage” (Roshwald, 2006:254). This means that the emphasis is placed on respect for political institutions, acquiring citizenship, and a feeling of attachment to the nation, which means that there is an idea of being a responsible and active citizen. It is easier for an immigrant to acquire these characteristics when they come to a new country.

The civic conceptions of national identity are expected to show more favorable attitudes towards immigrants, but can be moderated by support for the other two dimensions. Byrne (2011) hypothesizes that the reason behind why there is a broad, virtually unanimous support for the civic dimension can exist across many different groups in the USA, even though all Americans fully embrace immigrants. This hypothesis can be used on Sweden and on Swedes as well, since the criteria for a civic conception of national identity are based on a voluntaristic notion of nationality, which prioritizes a common territory with legal institutions and participation in these political institutions. Thus, the civic model, sees institutional ties such as gaining citizenship and holding strong sentiments towards the country of residence as the key features to national identity. There are still boundaries between members and nonmembers in the civic model but it is more inclusive for integration for social outsiders into the nation. Hence, people who subscribe to the civic conception will be more accepting of immigrants from different cultures as long as they are willing to respect the law, develop positive sentiments towards their country, and participate actively in the political process. This is where the sense of connectedness and national unity is rooted and group members share, instead of an emphasis on shared cultural characteristics. In comparison, the
ethnic conceptions of national identity represent a more exclusive perception of national identity compared with civic conceptions of national identity.

The liberal conceptions of national identity comes from the Lockean principles of the individual pursuit of happiness and limited government interference. The liberal dimension are being described as the “American Creed”, which embodies values such as individualism, democracy, tolerance, civil liberties and egalitarianism. It sounds like the civic dimension but the liberal dimension focuses more on individual rights rather than the public good. The focus is on values and norms, which is the informal rights, rather than the formal that the civic dimension encompasses, like political or human rights.

It is the focus on common ideological principles rather than on native and cultural traits, which is embodied by a commitment to democratic principles and civil liberties, that is what distinguishes the liberal dimension of national identity from the ethnic/cultural. The liberal dimension should be the most inclusive because it allows for the recognition that the national is comprised of diverse communities. Uniformity is achieved only through honoring the “American Creed” and this leaves room to honor the heritage and cultures of different groups.

If you look at all three conceptions or dimensions which will be used here, the ethnic/cultural is the least inclusive and the liberal the most inclusive. Byrne takes a point of view from a “multiple traditions” theory, which is the suggestion that the American identity have a broad range of norms that all American shares, regardless of ethnic origin or immigrant status. This means that there can be a range of identified norms that encompasses the content of American identity, which are in competition and contradiction with each other. Thus, “a complex set of norms exist in which the affinity to norms associated with one dimension of identity do not exclude an affinity for the norms associated with other dimensions” (Byrne, 2011:488). A person can then hold two contradictory sets of attitudes in their conception of national identity, which will lead to different attitudes towards immigrants. She sees these dimensions as intertwined and that a person identifies with all of them at the same time, even if the ethnic/cultural and the liberal are contrasting dimensions. The focus here is on were a person puts their balance (high, moderate, low) between the dimensions that creates attitudes towards immigrants and this is what shapes the individuals’ attitudes.

An unequal balance, which means that an individual favors one or more dimensions at the cost of the others, will result in either extremely negative or positive attitudes towards immigrants. An
individual that hold moderate levels of these three dimensions of national identity is more likely to express neutral-to-positive attitudes towards immigrants. It is both the support for each dimension of national identity and the support of each dimension vis-à-vis each other that is important in this framework. This makes this framework a more open and multidimensional perspective of looking at the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants.

Figure 1 shows the different dimensions and what includes in which dimension. She has two different years, but I will only use the 1996 model in my study, since the 2004 model is set when a major disaster had struck America and there were an anti-Muslim wave in America at that time and that is not applicable for Sweden today and I want to have a good balance between the three dimensions and the different sets, and in the 2004, the balance is on the ethnic/cultural side. Sweden is a country where the expressions like family home, welfare society, the Swedish Model, and “Sweden the middle way” is known. This is has derived from functionsocialism, which is a mix between capitalism and communism. “A middle way”, not too far to the right and not too far to the left. The people in Sweden have been able to identify with the feeling at home and welcome in a society where justice and equality are core values. This has led to a thinking about solidarity and cohesion and a will to stand for up the greater good, the good of the group, if needed (Hermansson & Israel, 1996). The model will be adapted to Sweden and will say, “Lived in Sweden”, instead of America since the study is focused in Sweden and not in the USA. The liberal criteria has been replace with Behave Swedish since this is more in line with the Swedish way. Pride in democracy and equal treatment of group is not as important in Sweden as is it in the U.S.A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic/Cultural</th>
<th>Civic</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born in Sweden</td>
<td>Speak Swedish</td>
<td>Pride in Swedish history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived in Sweden</td>
<td>Hold Swedish citizenship</td>
<td>Behave Swedish (social, cultural, political)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian religion</td>
<td>Feel Swedish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect for Swedish laws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1. The Dimensions of National Identity**

I will use this theoretical framework when analyzing the findings of the interviews and see how respondents see their national identity through these three dimensions and how the dimensions of their national identity is shaping their attitudes towards immigrants.
3. Methodological framework

In this chapter I will present my methodological choices for my study. It will contain how I gathered my empirical data (interviews) and how it is going to be analyzed (thematic analysis). I will also describe the reasoning behind the sources and the selection of the data that is collected with the method.

3.1 Research Method

This study aims at examining how different concepts are linked together; a qualitative approach will be used to gain a deeper understanding of social questions or problems of individuals of groups (Creswell, 2009:4). The methodology of this research shall be a structured and focused case study of 8 different respondents’ views of their conceptions of national identity and attitudes towards immigrants. The data from the interviews will be analyzed with a thematic analysis to explore if there is any correlation between the conceptions of national identity and attitudes towards immigrants.

3.2. Selection of Research Methods

Since this study has taken the form of a field study with a qualitative approach and primary sources are mostly used in the form of interviews. The interviews were done in two sets; the first with six university students, and the second with two people who do not have a university degree. The selection of respondents was based on age (only young people) and ethnic background, because that was the focus of the study and the selection was made trying to get an even distribution between Swedes and non-Swedes. The selection ended up with four with Swedish background and two that had other ethnic backgrounds in the first set and two with Swedish background in the second set. The selection of respondents was done in two phases. In the first instance, people from two university classes were asked and randomly picked without any preference and the second was done in the same way but in a different setting, namely searching for people that had negative attitudes towards immigrants, since the first set did not produce a broad and nuanced data as expected. The interviews lasted between 15-45 minutes. All of the interviewees were asked to answer questions related to three sections: Their views on national identity, their views about and towards immigrants, and if there is, in their view, any correlation between the two.
Due to the time limits for gathering the necessary information in the form of interviews, this study has relied on findings from interviewees residing in Växjö and Halmstad. The interviews were all conducted in Swedish but were translated to English when used in writing. As written above in the first chapter the interviewees will be anonymous in the text since the study is handling such a delicate subject and there is no need for this particular study to know who the respondents are. The interviews are semi-structured since the aim is to get the respondents’ own thoughts and views about the questions and themes.

**Respondent A:** Student, Swedish

**Respondent B:** Student, Global Identity

**Respondent C:** Student, Swedish

**Respondent D:** Student, Other Identity

**Respondent E:** Student, Other Identity

**Respondent F:** Student, Swedish

**Respondent G:** Working, Swedish

**Respondent H:** Unemployed, Swedish

The data from the interviews have then been analyzed through a thematic analysis, which is “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). Since this study looks at the respondents’ subjective views of national identity, a data driven thematic analysis do not go in with a pre-statement about the questions and the themes are created from the empirical data not a pre-set theory. I could have used a discourse analysis but since the purpose of this study is not to look for how people use linguistics to explain their conceptions of identity, this is why a thematic analysis was to prefer. A thematic analysis is used to process qualitative empirical data e.g. interview data. A data driven analysis is used to identify themes more or less impartially in the data. They are reduced to final themes, are given new concepts and theoretical definitions. After getting familiarized with the data by reading and re-reading it and doing a transcription the initial codes were generated by listing possible themes. This was done by choosing interesting sentences and code them. The next step was to check the codes, which were developed into themes. These themes were reviewed, which means that some themes
were deleted or rewritten. The themes were defined and named. A full report with a set of fully worked-out themes and a write-up of the report is shown in the next chapter 4. Finding and Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006:77-98). The findings from the interviews have then been analyzed with the help of the analytical framework outlined in the theoretical framework chapter above.

In order to retrieve background information about the issue and place it within a larger societal context, this study has foremost relied on printed secondary sources such as books and articles. Many of the articles were retrieved by using the university article database search engine, LibHub as well as Google Scholar. Search words that were included and used by their own or in different combinations included: *Immigrants, National Identity, Sweden, and Attitudes towards immigrants.*
4. Findings and Analysis

This chapter is a combined Finding and Analysis chapter, which means that both the findings from the empirical data will be presented as well as the analysis of the data. The reasoning behind this is because the research questions are designed in a way so it make sense to combine these two chapter into one. First the findings and analysis from the first question; “What are the different conceptions of the Swedish national identity?” will be explained and presented. After that a section with the findings only from what the respondents see as positive and negative with immigrants will be outlined. The reason why there is not an analysis part for the second part is that it will be presented in the last part, to avoid repetition of data. This presents the finding of the last research question; “Is there a correlation between the conceptions of national identity and attitudes towards immigrants?” that will both include a part where I present what I found in the data and what the respondents themselves thought about the correlation. There will be an analysis at the end combining the two parts.

4.1 Being Swedish – Findings and Analysis

4.1.1 Being Swedish – Findings

The first section will be about how the respondents answered with regard to the conceptions of their national identity, in this case the Swedish national identity, as well as if the respondents felt they had another national identity, and their conceptions about that national identity. One of the first questions that the respondents had to answer was “What does being Swedish mean to you”? Here, two different categories were identified a) Born in Sweden and b) Born in a foreign country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Byrne’s dimensions</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents G,H (2)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Ethnic/Cultural, Civic, Liberal</td>
<td>Unequal Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent F (1)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Ethnic/Cultural, Civic, Liberal</td>
<td>Unequal Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent A, C (1)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Ethnic/Cultural ,Civic,</td>
<td>Moderate Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent B (1)</td>
<td>Global Identity</td>
<td>Ethnic/Cultural, Civic, Liberal</td>
<td>Moderate Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents D,E (2)</td>
<td>Other Identity</td>
<td>Ethnic/Cultural, Civic, Liberal</td>
<td>Moderate Balance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Dimensions of National Identity
A) Being born in Sweden (six respondents)

The respondents who were born in Sweden were divided into four different categories in the table, depending on their answers about what was important to them about being Swedish.

The first group encompasses two respondents that talk about all the dimensions in Byrne’s theoretical framework but had an unequal balance, favoring the ethnic/cultural dimension.

**Respondent G:** I know the language, I have my roots here. I work and pay taxes here and yeah I am within the system.

**Respondent H:** Yeah I feel like a Swede. Speak Swedish, act like a typical Swede. I am not a rebel, I go together with the rest of my fellows in society. Yeah I know how a Swede, the moral and the ethics in this society.

The second group is one respondent who talk about the Ethnic/Cultural and Civic dimension and the liberal dimension. This respondent had an unequal balance favoring the civic dimension at the cost of the ethnic/cultural and liberal dimensions.

**Respondent F:** No, the thing is that if I was born somewhere else, but I felt like this is home, then I still would be Swedish. I think that it is about where you feel at home.

The third group includes two respondents who brought up all three of the dimensions and had a moderate balance between them.

**Respondent A:** Yes, well I am really Swedish, I would say that. I am born in Sweden, have Swedish parents, Swedish grandparents. Well, Swedish background. Swedish is, well, I think there is, I believe that you do not have to be born in Sweden to be Swedish, I do not think that, but if you are in Sweden and you have, yeah a Swedish citizenship, I believe you are Swedish then. Then you can be Swedish and something else as well, but with two citizenships then. I do not think that it is something; I do not think that you have to be like me to be seen as Swedish

**Respondent C:** For me it is that I am born in the country and I that I understand our culture. I know when stuff happens were, and how you act in our culture. So, I know the culture you know, and that I know the language, and that I know the country, can find my way and so. It is the culture. Traditions, language.
The fourth group covers a respondent who also brought up all dimensions and also had a moderate balance the dimensions. The reason why the respondent is in another category than the other two respondents with the same result is because the respondent were brought up in another country than Sweden and had another view of their conception of national identity than the other two, which is more of a global identity.

**Respondent B:** For my part, I feel that Swedish, I am born in Sweden with Swedish parents and raised in Spain. So you can say that I am an immigrant, but in Spain then. I have gone to a Spanish school, until I was 15 when we moved back home again. Swedish for me, it may sound really strange, it lack some meaning. I have a Swedish passport that gives me a lot of advantages, I have a Swedish citizenship and that gives me extremely many advantages but I am not bound to Swedish traditions.

**B) Born in a foreign country (two respondents)**

The respondents who were born in a foreign country with different ethnic backgrounds only had one group in the table. All three dimensions were brought up and the balance was moderate.

**Respondent D:** You mean how Swedish I feel? I am thinking about language and stuff like that, I feel that a part of the Swedish society, well I know the language; I know facts about Sweden you know, I know how Sweden looks. So in that way I can feel that I am Swedish. I do not have the feeling, not yet! I do not know if I am going to get that later in life.

**Respondent E:** Yes but it becomes, I feel that right now it cannot be a 10 or so, even if I am born down there I have got, like I said before also grown up here, so I have lived the bigger part of my life here and because of that you have felt that you are Swedish as well. But I still have the roots from down there and then I would say a 9 maybe, on the scale. Because even I am going to live in Sweden for the rest of my life, I am going to feel Bosnian as well.

**4.1.2 Being Swedish – Analysis**

The analysis of the first section will be done by looking at on the respondents´ answers in relation to the analytical framework (Byrne´s theory). It will be two subcategories as in the findings, a) Being born in Sweden and b) Born in a foreign country.
According to Byrne (2011) people all feel the three dimensions (Ethnic/cultural, Civic and Liberal) at the same time and it is the balance between the three that creates attitudes toward immigrants. If there is an unequal balance, which means that an individual favors one or more dimensions at the cost of the others, will result in either extremely negative or positive attitudes towards immigrants. While an individual who holds moderate levels of these three dimensions of national identity, is more likely to express neutral-to-positive attitudes towards immigrants. It is both the support for each dimension of national identity and the support of each dimension vis-á-vis each other that is the importance in this framework.

This study uses Figure 1. To see which dimensions the respondents talked about and how they talked about them to see how the balance between the dimensions were.

**Figure 1. The Dimensions of National Identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic/Cultural</th>
<th>Civic</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born in Sweden</td>
<td>Speak Swedish</td>
<td>Pride in Swedish history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived in Sweden</td>
<td>Hold Swedish citizenship</td>
<td>Behave Swedish (social, cultural, political)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian religion</td>
<td>Feel Swedish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Respect for Swedish laws</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A) Born in Sweden (six respondents)**

The people who were born in Sweden did name the two first criteria in the ethnic/cultural dimension, talk about the criteria in the Civic dimension, as well as the criteria in the liberal dimension.

There were two respondents who favored the ethnic/cultural dimension at the cost of the civic and liberal dimension, which resulted in an unequal balance of the dimensions, which were extremely negative attitudes towards immigrants. There were one respondent who favored the civic dimension at the cost of the ethnic/cultural and liberal dimensions, which resulted in an unequal balance, which resulted in extremely positive attitudes towards immigrants.

The other three respondents did have a more moderate balance between the dimensions and their attitudes towards immigrants were neutral to positive. This is more developed in the next section.
B) Born in a foreign country (two respondents)

The two respondents who were born in a foreign country did name the two first criteria in the ethnic/cultural dimension, talk about the criteria in the Civic dimension, as well as the criteria in the liberal dimension. These two respondents did also have a moderate balance of the dimensions and they were neutral to positive.

4.2 Attitudes towards immigrants – Findings

In this section, the findings from the empirical data of positive and negative attitudes towards immigrants will be explained. The respondents were asked what they thought was positive or/and negative with immigrants. It will be divided into two different parts, one covering the positive attitudes and the second the negative attitudes. The respondents born in Sweden and the respondents born in a foreign country will be separated as in the first part covering National Identity.

4.2.1 Attitudes towards immigrant – Findings – Positive aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Ethnic Background</th>
<th>Positive Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents A, B, F (3)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Economic, Humanitarian, Social, Cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents C, G, H (3)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Humanitarian,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent D (1)</td>
<td>Other Ethnic Background</td>
<td>Humanitarian, Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent E (1)</td>
<td>Other Ethnic Background</td>
<td>Humanitarian, Economic, Social, Cultural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Positive Aspects

A) Respondents born in Sweden (six respondents)

The respondents born in Sweden differentiated into two groups talking about positive aspects about immigrants.

The first group with three respondents thought that all aspects were positive; the economic, the humanitarian, the social, and the cultural aspects. They brought up that immigrants can boost the economy and that immigrants help out with work that Swedes do not want. The second was that we are trading ideas and learning to understand each other and can help each other out.
**Respondent A:** I am very positive to immigrants, not all immigrants but that has nothing to do with that they are immigrants. It is because of the person and the personality. It does not matter if you an immigrant or born in Sweden. I am positive about immigrants as a group. Well on my part, I think that many immigrant get the “bad” jobs that the Swedes does not want. If we did not have as many immigrants as we have, we would be struggling with some jobs, like within healthcare and cleaning jobs, since Swedes are so picky.

**Respondent B:** It is only positive, the more we meet and trade ideas, the less risk for wars and misunderstanding. No it is only positive.

**Respondent F:** I think it is positive with people from different cultures and background. That we can live together, it is profitable for everybody. Multiculturalism. I also think that it is good since we get in labor force, and that is good for the economy, when we get adults here, since we done have to pay for welfare and healthcare. So that is positive. And trading ideas, I do not think I have anything negative.

The second group of respondents with three respondents did only talk about the humanitarian aspects as positive. That we are helping people and saving lives.

**Respondent C:** Well, I am a little bit like. The positive for example, we take in refuges, we have saved lives. But on the other side, I do not know if we can give them, we do not understand them enough, so we can give them the help that they need. There is always something negative where there is something positive. Yeah sure, we have saved a life, but they should have a real life real too.

**Respondent H:** Yes, I am positive to immigrants that are grateful. But I am negative to immigrants that are ungrateful. They all have something to be thankful for. We do not owe them anything. They should not bite the hand that feeds them.

**B) Respondents born in a foreign country (two respondents)**

The two respondents born in a foreign country were divided since they were talking about different positive aspects. One talked about all of the aspects, while the other only talked about the humanitarian and economic aspects.
**Respondent D:** Well, when I talk about the country that receive the immigrant, like Sweden. It is really positive, since Sweden can help a lot of people that cannot help themselves or cannot help that they live in a country where there is war. So it is really positive that countries that really can take of immigrants, can do that.

**Respondent E:** The positive I would say that it is good that you can come here if you need help or so. That is how I got here and I needed the help, because you needed to flee from you home and you are grateful that there are countries that can receive people. And work, since people can come here to work. Maybe there is not work for them where they live and they can come here and work. The positive side is that you can live with people from your own home country and known before, so that is positive.

4.2.2 Attitudes towards immigrants – Findings – Negative Aspects

In this sections the attitudes towards immigrants from negative aspects will be elaborated. It will still be a division between respondents born in Sweden and respondents born in a foreign country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Ethnic Background</th>
<th>Negative Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent F (1)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents G, H (2)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Economic, Social, Cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent A (1)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Social, Cultural, Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents B, C (2)</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>Cultural, Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent D (1)</td>
<td>Other Ethnic Background</td>
<td>Cultural, Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent E (1)</td>
<td>Other Ethnic Background</td>
<td>Cultural, Social</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3. Negative Aspects**

**A) Respondents born in Sweden (six respondents)**

The respondents born in Sweden will be divided into four different groups since they all talked about different aspects and highlighted different negative aspects.

The first group is one respondent who did not see any negative aspects at all with immigrants and only saw positives with having immigrants in Sweden.

**Respondent F:** Yes and I cannot come up with anything negative.
The second group is two respondents who did highlighted that the economic, social and cultural aspects were negative.

**Respondent G:** No then it is the commitment, to learn the language. If there is no commitment, why are they here? There is not even conflicts in some countries anymore, and they are still going to be here and not learn the language. Some of them have lived here for over 60 years and still has not learn the language. I think that is wrong. I do not think it is too much to ask when you have saved someone from dying. So to adapt is not too much to ask for.

**Respondent H:** I am really negative to people who come here and do not respect our ways and do not listen to the government. If you come here you should be happy with what you get. We do not have work for our own population. I do not think so, we have enough of Swedish youth that are unemployed and they need work first.

The third group is a respondent who talked about the economic, social and cultural aspects as negative and that was language. Since language affect all the different aspects they were all included.

**Respondent A:** The only I can think of that could be negative, is if you are working in a place where you meet a lot of people, it can be a problem with the language. So I think it is a good ideas to try to learn Swedish a soon as possible.

The fourth group encompasses two respondents who highlighted the cultural and social aspects, in terms of ignorance and unwillingness to understand other people and cultures.

**Respondent B:** There is negatives too and the only negative I can see with immigrants really, is that it creates a lot of weird national feelings. There is an ignorance about people, there is no tolerance in our society. It is more the attitudes that are the problem than the immigrants.

**Respondent C:** The negative is that there will always be problems, there will be nationalism and that creates exclusion and that is something we cannot get rid of and that creates conflicts. We do not understand them and they do not understand us and that can create a conflict.

**B) Respondents born in a foreign country (two respondents)**

The two respondents born in a foreign country were again divided since they highlighted different problems they saw even if they both saw negatives within the cultural and social aspects.
**Respondent D:** This is really funny, since I am an immigrant myself but I think it is negative. When it comes to the cultural and social aspects of immigration. Because, it is really nice that you have a picture in your head that people can come together with the cultural, that we mix and it is a good thing with multiculturalism, no. If we are realistic, it is not multicultural. I mean that it does not benefit all, it really does not. It is a cultural clash and if people cannot get a job because they have a certain origin and they blame it on that and that leads to that society gets more gaps and divisions.

**Respondent E:** All different kinds of cultural background, it can be a disadvantage. Because people have fled from countries, where there is war and you have fought against each other and then all of the sudden you get to another country and get placed together, again, and I can think that can trigger some conflicts. But I still think that it is each and every person’s decision that come here, the overall attitude.

**4.3 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants – Findings**

In this last part the correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants will be explained. It will first be a section where I have read the interviewees answers and looked for the correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants, at respondent level. After there will be a section there the respondents themselves think about the correlation of national identity and attitudes towards immigrants.

**4.3.1 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants – My findings**

In the findings where I did look for a correlation at respondent level, I only found that one did expressed any sort of correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants. The other respondents did not recognized themselves or others in that claim that the national identity should have an impact on attitudes towards immigrants.

**Respondent C:** You have your national identity, it is absolute. If you are born in Sweden with Swedish parents you are absolute Swedish. You can even think badly about your own country and
like others. So yeah, it starts somewhere and that is in the national identity, so it has some kind of
correlation.

4.3.2 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants – The respondents answers – Findings

The last question that the respondents were to answer were “Do you think that there is a correlation
between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants? For you, For others?”

From the thematic analysis two themes were identified a) Cannot see a correlation for themselves
but in relation to others and b) Cannot see a correlation at all. None one of the respondents thought
that there was a correlation between their own national identity and their attitudes to immigrants.
It will still be divided between respondents born in Sweden and born in a foreign country

A) Cannot see a correlation for themselves but into relation to others - Born in Sweden
(four respondents)

There are four respondents born in Sweden that could see a correlation between the national identity
and attitudes towards immigrant when talking about other. Two groups emerged, one that thinks
that peer pressure, upbringing and personality had an effect on the national identity and attitudes
towards immigrants. The other group thought that it had something to do with fear. That you fear
the unknown and new and feel threatened by it. So you want to cling on to your roots and traditions.
The first group then with two respondents did state where you grew up and peer pressure could
have something to do with why others see a correlation between the national identity and attitudes
towards immigrants

Respondent A: The things is that I feel very Swedish but I think all the nationalist do too. They
too see themselves as very Swedish. So I cannot see a correlation. I mean you can be an immigrant
and have a really bad attitudes towards other immigrants, so no I do not think there is a correlation.
I think there is a lot of peer pressure. Someone start and the others do not want to be any lesser. No
I do not think that it matter how Swedish you feel, since I feel pretty darn Swedish and I do not
have anything against immigrant, but at the same time someone else can feel Swedish and have
something against immigrant. I think much is about in which group you end up in.
**Respondent C:** No it is more that you connect to something that you are familiar with. If you are born in Sweden then you are Swedish, if you have not been raised in another country. Then you connect to what you feel is safe and use that to show strength against others. But I mean that it does not matter where you come from. I believe that, if you are a weak individual you are picked up by different groups and they can be anyone. It could be an immigrant group and you could fit in there and start hating another group instead.

The second group with two respondents thought that fear and ignorance could affect why others see a correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants.

**Respondent B:** I can see, I do not have a national identity in that sense, but I can clearly see the connection between that you are trying to keep Sweden Swedish and Swedish traditions, the more negative you become to change things. It becomes a question of principle. You will do anything so that the Swedish will stay Swedish and protected. You become afraid, you do not understand, or rather you do not want to understand. Fear and ignorance leads to that you do not want to look at anything else or see something else and that leads to hate, even if you do not know why.

**Respondent F:** I think that it can be fear, for something new. Or for something foreign. I also think that, this is not me but when you feel a strong national identity that it can be threatening that new people arrive from other cultures with other traditions. That they feel threatened, that their national identity will be destroyed if you implant other cultures and traditions.

**B) Cannot see a correlation at all – Born in Sweden (two respondents)**

There were two respondents who could not see a correlation at all, neither for them or others when talking about the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants. It was instead a case of commitment and will. It was also about your own position in the society, economically.

**Respondent G:** No but just because I am Swedish, there is still immigrants that I accept. If I have understood it right, because it does not matter if I had been an immigrant myself, I still think that you come here and adapt. As long as people do that, I do not have a problem. I do not hate immigrants just because I am Swedish, it is because of other reasons. They do not have the same right and wrong system as us. They do not have the same moral.

**Respondent H:** Because of the gaps in society, I think the correlation that the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants varies. If you are down at the bottom, unemployed, poor, then it is
very easy to become negative. For me, the way I see Swedish, I do not see a correlation, because I feel my attitude is negative, because how I feel and my situation in society.

A) Cannot see a correlation for themselves but into relation to others - Born in a foreign (two respondents)

The two respondents who were born in a foreign country did not see a correlation for themselves but listed overall attitude as one possibility and culture as another.

Respondent D: I can think, immigrant who? Like I said, that a Swede do not see a Finish or Norwegian person as an immigrant, but see a person from Africa and Asia as an immigrant. So the closer in culture you are, less negative you become.

Respondent E: Well, I do not know. Maybe there is a correlation but I have not noticed it, that there is a correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrant. But it can be there from the beginning. That people feel really Swedish and that they have thought that immigrants and immigration are not okay from the start. That they want to have Sweden to themselves, but it is not something I have noticed among my friends or people around me.

4.4 The correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants — Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Ethnic/Cultural</th>
<th>Civic</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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Table 4. Correlation between National Identity and Attitudes Towards immigrants

The table explains where the respondents puts their balance of the three dimensions (Ethnic/Cultural, Civic, and Liberal Identity) in Byrne´s study. There are three measures used;
High, Moderate and Low to see how the respondents have answered the questions about their conceptions of national identity.

According to Byrne (2011) the people with a moderate balance of the three dimensions would express neutral to positive attitudes and people with an unequal balance would either be extremely positive or negative. According to the table the respondents who have a moderate balance of the three dimensions, they all confirm Byrne’s theory about attitudes towards immigrants. The theory states that a person who have a moderate balance tend to have neutral to positive attitudes towards immigrants, which the majority of the respondents had.

Two respondents had high levels of the ethnic/cultural dimension and low levels on the civic and liberal dimensions. This means that they favored the ethnic/cultural dimension at the cost of the civic and liberal dimensions, which resulted in extremely negative attitudes towards immigrants. One respondent had high levels of the civic and liberal dimensions and a low level on the ethnic/cultural dimension. This made this respondent extremely positive towards immigrants.

From the collected data a correlation can be found since the respondents who had a moderate balance of the dimensions where neutral to positive towards immigrants. Out what the respondents answered about the questions relating the correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrant, they did not see a correlation for themselves but in relation others. From what I could find from my findings of the data a correlation can be seen. For example, Respondent A, had a conception of the Swedish national identity and were positive to immigrants but Respondent A could not see a correlation from themselves but in relation to others. From this study it be seen that there is a correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants based on Byrne´s theory since a moderate balance between the dimensions did create neutral to positive attitudes towards immigrants. Hence, this confirms Byrne’s theory even if the respondents did not see a correlation for themselves but in relation to others. This also applies on the respondents who did have an unequal balance, both extremely positive and negative. This is interpreted in a scale of more or less and not an absolute truth.

The respondents who had neutral to extremely positive attitudes towards immigrants tended to be able to see a correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants in relation to others. While the respondents who were extremely negative towards immigrants tended to not have this understanding of the correlation and did not see a correlation neither for themselves or others.
This was interesting to see that a correlation can exist even if the respondents could not see it. Could this be because of the choice of the method? I am thinking that if I would have chosen another method like the discourse analysis, would the results be different? It may have worked but the focus was not on the definition of linguistic and definitions of words themselves. The focus was on conceptions of national identity and if there was a correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants. It is possible to think that the results could have been different simply by the definition of the word national identity? Since one of the criteria in the framework was about to feel Swedish, this opens up about subjectivity and the complexity of this. Since every human have a subjective meaning about their national identity, it is hard to measure it in an objective way.

This means that both Byrne´s and this study point out the same results regarding the correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants.
5. Conclusions

In this section I conclude what this study was about, what result was shown in the analysis and how this all connects to the research questions and purpose, as well as to the previous studies. It will also be pointed out what the focus should be for future research.

5.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to explore the different conceptions of the Swedish national identity and see if there were a correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants. Empirically the study focuses on Sweden and the basis is qualitative interviews with eight young persons in Sweden, of both Swedish and non-Swedish origin.

The main findings in this study were:

First, that there are different conceptions of the national identity and that the respondents who were young and at university overall held a moderate balance between the dimensions while others who were selected for their more negative attitudes towards immigrants did not. Second, from this study it be seen that there is a correlation between the national identity and attitudes towards immigrants based on Byrne’s theory since a moderate balance between the dimensions did create neutral to positive attitudes towards immigrants, while an unequal balance created extremely negative or positive attitudes towards immigrants. The respondents who had neutral to extremely positive attitudes towards immigrants tended to be able to see a correlation between national identity and attitudes towards immigrants in relation to others. While the respondents who were extremely negative towards immigrants tended to not have this understanding of the correlation and did not see a correlation neither for themselves or others.

This study has contributed to the understanding of how national identity plays a role in shaping attitudes towards immigrants. In previous research the national identity has been studied in connection to something else, such as politics, economy or social situations e.g. (Facchini & Mayda 2009; Lödén, 2008). This study has had another focus, i.e. on how different types of
conceptions of the national identity shape the attitudes towards immigrants and how the national identity relates to attitudes towards immigrants.

5.2 Discussion

This study has shown that there is a correlation between on how we conceive the national identity and how we create certain attitudes towards immigrant, but there is a need for further research. For future research, looking at different ages would contribute more to the understanding on how the national identity is conceived in different generations and the generations are affecting each other, as well as looking at different socio-economic situations.
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**Internet sources**


