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Is Religion a Dividing Force?

A mixed methods approach to the experiences of religious
Muslims in the secular society of Sweden

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Abstract

The idea that increasing immigration will lead to a growing Muslim presence in Western Europe and that this in turn stands in contrast to the secularity of these states frames the context of this study. Therefore, this thesis explores the experiences of religious Muslims in the secular Swedish society. Potential problems between the religious Muslim minority and secular Swedish majority have been examined through a mixed method approach. This approach combined semi-structured interviews with Muslims and a logistic regression with data from Swedes. The results show that the religiosity of Muslims does not hinder their subjective integration into the Swedish society. This is especially the case for the second-generation immigrants who want to adapt to the customs of the society, which was a strong factor for Swedes to rate Muslims positively. Therefore, religion itself does not seem to be the divider between the Muslim participants and Swedes in this study. What seems to be more problematic is the general perception of Muslims as being distinct according to Swedes. This relates to the finding that Muslim women wearing the hijab were the most vulnerable to discrimination based on religion. Thus, even though the second-generation immigrants are not asking for special treatment due to their religion, take part in Swedish celebrations, speak Swedish and are part of the labour market, they still face discriminatory behaviour. The wearing of the hijab identifies them as Muslims and thus as an culturally and religiously different group. Even though they personally feel accepted, it cannot be said that integration is achieved since they remain discriminated against by the majority society due to the identification as a different group.

Keywords: Religion, Sweden, immigration, Muslims, integration, religious freedom, mixed methods

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1. Introduction

The current attitude towards the issue of religious freedom in Western Europe is somewhat paradoxical. The European Union has put forward the idea of a resolution regarding the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief at the Human Rights Council in 2018. However, it remains the case that religious symbols can be banned for example at the workplace (EEAS, 2018). This follows a ruling from the European Court of Justice but it often discriminates against a particular religious group, namely Muslims (BBC, 2017).

Individuals and whole groups are no longer bound to a specific territory and transnational migration leads to the increased mixing of different cultures and within that religions (Hermans & DiMaggio, 2007). In a world that is becoming progressively more globalised, it is inevitable that conflicts between different religious and cultural groups occur. Over the past few years there has been an increasingly negative perception of Islam in Western countries, especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which in turn has led to negative behaviour towards Muslims (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2011). The mixture of cultures has been addressed prominently and negatively by Huntington's (2002) *clash of civilizations* thesis. His position is that the current societal tensions in Europe can be explained through unwillingness of Muslims to adapt to the European culture (Huntington, 2002). To put the blame of social tensions on only one group oversimplifies the problem. These tensions can derive from differences between groups and the main ones between Muslims and Western societies are "found in religiosity, gender roles and sexual norms" (Norris & Inglehart, 2012: 247).

One feature of Western Europe is secularisation, which was for a long time seen as the standard development by sociologists of religion in modern societies (Bader, 2010). This perception has changed, since the secularity of Western Europe is seen

as an exception today (Casanova, 2007). Secularisation is most widely understood as a decline of religion in society and is connected to modernisation (Casanova, 2007). This connection implies that groups who do not follow this are less modern. So what is it like to be a religious Muslim in a secular society? As Scholte (2005) says: “the key identity distinction for a person of faith is (...) between believers and non-believer” (p.244). This means that religious people might perceive a greater distance between themselves and non-believers and vice versa.

Sweden is been considered as one of the most secularised countries in the world and a significant number of its inhabitants have a Muslim background (Tomasson, 2002; Bader, 2010). Not only is Sweden becoming increasingly heterogeneous, but the topic of religion is also becoming more present through media in an otherwise secular country (Jonsson, 2007). Swedes compared to Muslims live their religion more privately and even though there is religious freedom in Sweden this might lead to conflicts (Roald, 2013). This freedom can be perceived differently and Muslims in the West feel there is a lack of it (Alwall, 1998). Therefore, I perceive Sweden as a valid and interesting case to examine the relationship between the secular majority and Muslim minority. Malmö is interesting for this research since it is the third largest city in Sweden and in 2010 16% of its population had a Muslim background (Alwall, 2000; Lagervall & Stenberg, 2016). Moreover, there has been a significant amount of negative media attention surrounding Malmö in recent years and headlines such as “How Muslim Migration Made Malmö, Sweden A Crime Capital” are common in the news (Qazvini, 2017).

1.1 Purpose, Aim and Research Questions

Different views of religion between religious minorities and the secular majority in Western European societies can lead to conflicts. By religion in my research I refer to a belief-system with specific actions and institutions which relates to a higher being (Alwall, 1998). I am focusing on conflicts between religious and secular groups in a state and I am going to address what impact religion has on integration in the secular society of Sweden. Thus, I am working with a conceptual problem

which will improve understanding of the situation of religious Muslims in Sweden. This in turn helps to grasp the bigger picture of a society in which religious minorities live in a secular state. As we can see in recent developments such as the refugee issue in Europe, migration will increase rather than decrease for the foreseeable future. Therefore, it is important to get an insight into the experiences of minority groups. Furthermore, my results could raise awareness for the state and society to engage differently with new minority groups with their own religious and cultural backgrounds. Different aspects of religious freedom and if religions are treated equally will be discussed. Moreover, the exclusion of religion in the public and how this might alienate immigrants rather than include them should be examined. I will address these aspects with my research in order to contribute valuable information to this issue.

Previous research regarding Muslims in Europe has often focused on countries such as Germany, France or the UK and to a lesser extent on Sweden (Schmidt, 2004). If migration continues to increase, in 2050 Sweden's population could consist of 30.6% people with a Muslim background, a significantly higher percentage than in other Western European countries (Sherwood, 2017). Thus, the focus on Sweden and the relationship between Muslim immigrants and the majority population is valid. Furthermore, a lot of studies which explore the relationship between immigration and religion are quantitative studies which focus on characteristics of religiosity (see van Tubergen, 2007; Kelley & De Graaf, 1997). Quantitative methods may neglect the subjective experiences of religious minorities which I am going to explore through interviews. As mentioned by Larsson (2009) there are some aspects which have not been researched enough such as generational differences and he recommends researchers to examine what Muslims are thinking and not to rely on vague descriptions. My research aims at filling some of these gaps and shedding light on the experiences of religious Muslims and examining if these have had an effect on their subjective integration into Swedish society. By subjective integration I mean if Muslims feel that they are integrated according to their personal definition. In the context of this, multiculturalism and assimilation

will be addressed as two approaches to integration. Since I am discussing the secular society of Sweden I also want to understand the Swedish perception of Muslims. I am going to use a mixed methods approach and I will combine semi-structured interviews with Muslims in Malmö with quantitative data of ethnic Swedes¹. For the analysis of the quantitative data I will conduct a logistic regression analysis, which will examine what factors influence feelings towards Muslims negatively. In my discussion, I want to bring the results of the two methods together in order to examine both perspectives on the issue of religious Muslims and immigration in Sweden. Therefore, I propose the following mixed methods research question:

How does Muslims' religiosity in a secular society influence their subjective integration in Sweden and how does the perception of Muslims by Swedes connect to that?

This paper will demonstrate how religious Muslim live their religion in the secular Swedish society and for this the following qualitative questions have been phrased.

- *Are there generational differences depending on religiosity and religious culture and if so which?*
- *What does integration mean for religious Muslims and how integrated do they feel?*
- *How do Muslims live and experience their religion in the secular society of Sweden?*

The study takes a quantitative approach to explore: *Which factors, either positively or negatively, influence the feelings of Swedes towards Muslims?* The following hypotheses will be analysed.

H1: The importance of traditions for Swedes is negatively correlated with feelings towards Muslims.

¹ The understanding of Swedes and Muslims for this study will be explained in detail on page 12.

H2: Swedes who think Muslims want to be distinct have more negative feelings towards them.

H3: The importance of religion for Swedes does not influence their feelings towards Muslims negatively.

This paper will begin by addressing the research context Sweden and its approach to immigration as well as its recent history of Muslim immigration. After that previous research regarding religion in secular societies, religion and immigration as well as Muslims in Sweden will be presented. This will show where my research can be located and what inputs I can use for my own topic. My theoretical framework will address the main concepts present in my research questions. Religion and religiousness will be defined, and I will show how I understand these terms in the context of my research. Furthermore, I want to explain my understanding of integration for this study and within that also multiculturalism and assimilation. Lastly, social integration theory will be addressed and applied. My methodology section will explain my motivation for a mixed method approach and my qualitative and quantitative data. Since I am following a convergent design my quantitative and qualitative results and analysis sections will be separate. Finally, in the conclusion I will combine my methods and answer my research question as well as reflecting on the contribution of this research and its limitations.

1.2 Background: Research Context

This section aims at framing the context in which I conducted my study. Since I am discussing the secular Swedish society and my participants experiences of it, I want to address its secularity. As this chapter will show the Swedish society is perceived as secular but Christian culture is still very present. Sweden's approach to Muslim immigration will subsequently be briefly presented and critically reviewed.

1.2.1 In which way is Sweden secular?

Scholars agree that Sweden is a secular country in a traditional sense and one reason for that is the homogeneous Swedish society itself which in turn has led to little development of religious diversity and social differentiation (Tomasson, 2002). However, Swedes continue to hold certain religious beliefs, for example the belief in an afterlife or in a higher power. This can also be seen in Zuckerman's study (2012) in which non-religious Swedes were reluctant to identify themselves as atheist.

One aspect of secularisation is the decline of religious beliefs and practices in modern societies (Casanova, 2007). The decreased participation in church activities and services as well as religious belief is one aspect. Of Sweden's total population, around 60% were members of the Swedish Church in 2016 (Svenska Kyrkan, 2016). However, only 2% of the members of the Swedish Church regularly attend worship services which shows the decline of religious practice (Jänträ-Jareborg, 2010). Another aspect of secularisation is the absence of religion in the public space, hence privatisation of religion, but in this case the situation in Sweden is more complex (Jänträ-Jareborg, 2010). This is because of the strong Christian tradition present in Sweden evident through the high number of churches in the country (Casanova, 2007). According to Casanova (2007) the traditional understanding of secularisation is the differentiation of spheres. It means that the state is emancipated from religious institutions. This process can be seen in Sweden when the church and state were separated in the year 2000 (Jänträ-Jareborg, 2010). The church still kept some historic privileges and has a "semi-official role both as a state-regulated and as a religious organization" (Jänträ-Jareborg, 2010: 673).

1.2.2 Muslim Immigration in Sweden

The Swedish society did not pay sufficient attention to the growing Muslims presence due to labour immigration of the 1960s until the 1969 immigration report. The government was late to realise what a growing Muslims presence might demand from them. One reason for that was that the early immigrants did not plan

on staying in Sweden and thus demanded less from the society. This changed with the second phase, stretching from the 1970s to the 1990s, which involved the immigration of relatives. During this later phase Muslims had to become more familiar with Swedish customs and the society and they had to find a way to preserve their culture and religion. Another reason is that the Swedish government was “ignorant of Islam as a religious system” (Alwall, 1998: 176) and the social, legal and political consequences this implicated.

Boveri (2013) discusses the political dynamics of multiculturalism in Sweden, which I briefly want to present. In the 1970s Sweden was one of the first countries to implement multicultural policies. Previously, the dominant perspective of how to best integrate immigrants was assimilation. The view arose that the Swedish state should actively promote cultural pluralism which fitted into the national self-image of Sweden as a pioneer in human rights. However, in 1986 the multicultural approach to immigration was dropped. Sweden has a negative view towards accepting cultural or religious demands for exemptions from the common rule. The state interferes in religious matters where it violates Swedish values and laws which can lead to difficulties for religious groups other than Christians. Softer aspects of cultural exceptions have also been traditionally challenging for example regarding time off for worship or dress codes. This changed with the 2008 Discrimination Act in which direct and indirect discrimination were made illegal (Boveri, 2013). On the other hand, the European Court of Justice has ruled that in some cases the ban of religious symbols at work can be legal (EEAS, 2018). This concise section helps to set the context in which the participants of this study live and how they might face limitations regarding their religious and cultural expressions. It also gives an idea of the way the Swedish society engaged with Muslims immigrants.

2. Previous Research

Before I am going to discuss my theoretical concepts I will present a concise overview of previous research crucial to this study. With this I can provide the

reader with significant literature, show the gaps in it, and position this research within a consistent frame.

2.1 Religion in Secular Societies

The following studies connect to my research topic since they address different aspects of secular societies such as state neutrality, family influences and religious shifts. Research on religion in secular societies has been extensive in the field of sociology of religion. The secularisation hypothesis has already been criticised by Luckmann (1977) who argued that researchers were focused only on the decline of religion but not on other religious forms that replaced it. This is for example addressed by Demerath (2000) who states that religiousness in secular societies has shifted to a cultural religion which is lived more privately. Zuckerman's (2012) study explores the attitude to religion amongst non-religious Scandinavians and Americans. For Scandinavians religion is not per se something negative and they have an indifferent or even slightly positive perception of it. Zuckerman (2012) concludes that Scandinavian secularity is non-reactive and therefore more agnostic and mundane. In Scandinavia, non-religious people are not maligned which implies for my research that discrimination against minorities is not only based on their religiosity.

It is important that the secular state is neutral in order to assure equality between religions (Modood, 1998). It is argued by Bloemraad et al. (2008) that the attempt at upholding a cultural neutrality leads to more inequality in rights for the minority group, because this neutrality is impossible to uphold. Thus, a number of multiculturalist theorists argue that more recognition of cultural minorities is required. Kymlicka (1995) claims that the neutrality of the state is impossible since it has to have a public language, holidays and other aspects which derive from the majority group. Thus there should be some measures that guarantee the equal status of minorities. Therefore, I argue that by trying to be as neutral as possible the Swedish state implicitly favours some groups over others and implicitly excludes the perspective of religious minorities.

The study by Kelley and De Graaf (1997) shows that a nation's religious environment can affect religious belief. In secular countries the family exerts stronger control and thus influences the children's religiosity more. This is because secular influences through school and friends of their children pose a threat to them. For my research this can have an influence on second-generation migrants because their families' religiosity and strictness stands in contrast to the secularity of their environment. I can conclude that my research will focus on the aspect of religious freedom in secular societies which will add to the current research and discuss if religious minorities feel disadvantaged. The presented studies will also be taken into account for my analysis and possible confirmations or distinctions will be addressed.

2.2 Religion and Immigration

I need to address previous research regarding religion and immigration since this lies at the core of my research topic. Smith (1987) argued that immigration itself is a "theologizing experience" (p. 1181). He says that due to the challenges of immigration people turn more strongly to religion. There has been another line of arguing which goes into the opposite direction. Massey and Higgins (2011) results point more to an alienating hypothesis and found that immigrants do not change their religious belief but they change their behaviour. This finding is interesting to my research since part of my aim is to discover if people change their religious behaviour or belief in order to comply better with the secular society.

Foner and Alba (2008) found in their study that religion is perceived differently in the US and Western Europe regarding its role for integration. Western Europe has trouble recognising claims based on religion due to its secularity and therefore religion is seen as an obstacle for the integration process. Furthermore, the authors argue that national identities and institutions remain in a context of Christian heritage which does not leave equal space for Islam. This creates an awareness for Muslims of the secondary position of their religion. The authors see two tendencies for the second-generation Muslim immigrants. On the one hand, exclusion has led

to an increased potential for fundamentalist and radical groups while on the other hand young Muslims are striving for a more liberal Islam.

The study by van Tubergen (2007) focuses on the religious affiliation of first-generation immigrants in a secular context, in this case the Netherlands. His results show that the older the migrants were when they came to the Netherlands the more religious they are. The length of stay does not decrease this but seems to strengthen religious participation and affiliation. This study relates to my research since it examines if the religious affiliation of migrants changes through a secular context. In Erdal's (2013) qualitative study with Norwegian-Pakistani migrants, interviews have been conducted focusing on experiences of integration. The participants in her study expressed that a complete integration in terms of values and norms is not seen as necessary in order to be a member of the society. Erdal argues that the subjective experiences of the migrants regarding integration are more important for the socio-cultural integration. Research regarding the change in religiosity of immigrants has often been conducted through quantitative analysis. However, my research will examine my participants' experiences with the help of interviews, through which I will gain more detailed stories and explanations which would have been lost through only quantitative data. I want to add to the current research through examining if Muslims themselves perceive that religion helps or hinders their integration.

2.3 Muslims in Sweden

The last chapter of the previous research section will discuss studies regarding Muslims in Sweden. Larsson (2009) describes how there is a lack of research regarding "internal variations, theological debates, generational differences or secularisation processes among people of Muslim cultural background" (p.56). There are some qualitative studies such as Carlbom's (2006) that focuses on the Islamic Youth Movement in Sweden. His fieldwork data, points in the direction that the Muslims who are active in denominations oppose the assimilation of Muslims. Roald (2013) argues that Swedish values have an impact on Muslims in

Sweden who grew up here. As opposed to their parents, they perceive Islam as being gender equal. Roald (2012) furthermore argues that second-generation Muslims in Sweden connect higher importance to individualistic patterns and emphasise human rights. Thus, there is a generational difference and Islam is linked to values of the country which the person grew up in.

Elander et al. (2015) argue that there is a variety of Muslim identities which are nested in a hegemonic non-Muslim discourse. The participants in their study try to connect to the secular Swedish society while developing their Muslim identity. Roald (2012) also wrote about expressing religion in Sweden. Her results indicate that many Muslims show great attachment to cultural patterns from their home country. She argues that this derives from the position as a minority with experiences of powerlessness. This creates a need according to her to show visible traits in the public space such as head scarfs and minarets.

The research by Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking (2011) about Muslims in the West shows that anti-Muslim sentiments increased in Sweden in the aftermath of September 11 as well as the perception of Swedes that Islam cannot coexist with Swedish values. The increasingly negative attitude towards Muslims has been addressed by Bevelaner and Otterbeck (2010) as well. They found strong evidence that Muslims are perceived as a religiously distinct group by non-Muslims in Sweden as well as being falsely seen as homogenous. Overall, the authors note in accordance to Carlbom (2006) how there has been a lack of critical research which dares to criticise practices amongst Muslims out of fear of being regarded as racist or islamophobic.

In conclusion, there is a lack of critical research on Muslims in Sweden as well as a lack of focus on generational differences and internal variations. In my research I want to address generational differences and connect them to the secular influences of the society. Furthermore, I will critically analyse the stories of my participants as well as discuss the concept of religious freedom since this is becoming

increasingly important in a pluralistic society and has not been addressed as much. In order to not limit myself to only one perspective I will also analyse which factors influence the opinions of Swedes towards Muslims. This includes both perspectives in one study and can give the topic a wider understanding.

3. Theoretical Framework

This chapter will define the important key concepts for my research. Firstly, religion and religiosity will be defined and their usage in my research will be explained. Secondly, the concept of religious freedom and religious culture will be discussed in order to explain different perceptions of it between groups. Since the conversations with my participants are about their subjective integration this will be the third concept and within that multiculturalism and assimilation will be discussed and their relation to each other will be examined. Furthermore, I want to find out which of the two strategies immigrants themselves chose and if their answers can be seen along these two positions. Lastly, social integration theory will be addressed because I want to find out if participants who are feeling more integrated into the Swedish society consequently adjust more to its secular norms.

In this thesis I will henceforth refer to first and second-generation Muslim immigrants living in Sweden as Muslims. Furthermore, with Swedes I refer to non-Muslim ethnic Swedes without a migration background. However, I want to stress that by no means am I implying that the Muslims in this study are not Swedes or less Swedish. This differentiation has been made to easier distinguish who I am referring to throughout this paper.

3.1 Religion and Religiosity

Religion can be defined in either a substantive or in a functional way (Alwall, 1998). Whereas the first aims to explain what religion is, the second one is addressing its social function. I will use the definition presented by Alwall (1998)

because he has studied Muslims in Sweden, his definition is functional and since I want to explore what religion does in the context of integration and secularisation it is a good match. Alwall (1998) defines religion as referring “to a belief-system, and a socially defined set of actions and institutions (established to reflect this belief-system) relating man to a super-empirical order which he finds himself to be dependent on for his ultimate being” (p.68). I consider this definition to be broad enough to include a range of religions such as Islam and Christianity. It also includes the function of religion as a form of social control in order to avoid punishment (Fox, 2018).

The concept of religiosity helps to assess my participants religious practices and belief. Glock (1962) established five dimension of religious commitment which have been widely used by other researchers. Because Glock’s dimensions mainly relate to Christianity I want to include the study by El-Menouar (2014) who applied Glock’s concept to Muslim religiosity. With this I want to understand and assess my participants religiosity. Therefore, I will look at the following three dimensions: Identification, religious practice and religious belief because these are sufficient to note differences between my interview participants. El-Menouar (2014) introduces another dimension namely secular consequences which can give some important indication of my participants religiosity. In the following the dimensions will be presented and combined with El-Menouar’s (2014) research to have dimensions applicable for Muslim religiosity.

The identification dimension means whether my participants identify themselves as a religious Muslim and as belonging to a religious group. The religious practice dimension can be divided into the categories of ritual and devotion. As indicators for ritual El-Menouar (2014) used “the frequency of performing the ritual prayer (salat), the pilgrimage to Mecca, fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, and celebrating the end of the fasting during Ramadan (eid sagir)” (p. 61). For devotion El-Menouar (2014) used frequency of praying to Allah and the frequency of reciting

the basmala². Religious belief indicates the agreement with the basic beliefs of a religion. Within Islam this is the unquestioned belief in the existence of Allah and the belief in the Quran. The dimension of secular consequences captures how religious norms and laws guide one's everyday life and can be understood as religiosity itself according to El-Menouar (2014) and will therefore be addressed in the interviews. Indicators for this are: not drinking alcohol, eating halal meat, avoiding shaking hands with the opposite sex, the restraint of music and religious donation (zakat).

3.2 Freedom of Religion and Religious Culture

The discussion of religious freedom is of interest to my topic since from a Muslim perspective there is a lack of it in the West (Alwall, 1998). How groups understand religious freedom can depend on their religious culture, which will be addressed in this chapter as well. Casanova (2007) argues that there remains a dominant Christian culture in Sweden which can lead to a prioritization over other religions even though the state is supposed to be neutral. Religious liberty was first achieved in Sweden in 1952 which meant nobody was forced to belong to the Church of Sweden anymore (Jänträ-Jareborg, 2010).

In his dissertation about Muslims in Sweden Alwall (1998: 29) defines four aspects of religious liberty³. For the aim of this study I will focus on aspects of positive religious freedom such as the freedom from discrimination based on religion, freedom of religious belief and freedom to act according to one's belief. The freedom from discrimination based on religion is still present towards Muslims in Sweden for instance in the labour market (Agerström & Rooth, 2008). This is one aspect I want to explore more in the course of my interviews. Furthermore, religious freedom includes to have the right to hold religious beliefs, attitudes and values as

² “The saying of Bismi'llah, ‘in the Name of Allāh’, invoking a blessing upon every action and undertaking of a Muslim. (The Concise Oxford Dictionary of World Religions, 2018).

³ Alwall (1998) uses the term religious liberty but I will use the more established terms religious freedom or freedom of religion.

well as to be able to live your religion publicly and privately (Alwall, 1998). This is thrown into question by the harassment of Muslim women in public spaces who are wearing the hijab (Listerborn, 2015). Moreover, religious freedom includes the right to act according to one's belief and to be part of a religious community. The last notion is interesting for my research because the laws of the Swedish state or traditions do not necessarily correspond to the religious practices of Islam. As discussed before the state interferes in religious matters where it violates Swedish values and laws which are based on a Christian culture.

Alwall (1998) introduces other dimensions to the concept of religious freedom, some of which are of particular interest for the way in which they incorporate the political function of religion and religious legacy. These belong to the overall concept of religious culture which can differ between groups such as Swedes and Muslims. The first describes what role religion should have in the society and entails the distinction between secularism and integrism (Alwall, 1998). This means either the perception that religion and social order should be completely distinct or the same. It is clear that for Swedes the separation of state and church and with that the privatisation of religion is the norm. For some Muslims, especially when emigrating from a religious country this is not always so understandable. Of course, not every Muslim wants religion and state to be completely intertwined with each other but perhaps their "religion guides the individual's entire life within his community" (Alwall, 1998: 81) which is called sectarianism. Religious legacy refers to how people relate to traditions and to modern society. For many Muslims traditions are very important and there is a desire for them to be preserved, something which is threatened by the modern Swedish society. On the other hand, there are modernists who want to reinterpret religion in the context of modern society which I think could be younger Muslims in Sweden who want to combine both parts of their identity. Therefore, religious culture can explain differences in perception of religion and its role in society.

3.3 Subjective Integration

The term integration has been used extensively in political discussions and thus it is crucial to define as a researcher how oneself uses this concept. In my research I understand integration as achieved if “a culturally different group is accepted by the majority population at the same time as, without being discriminated against, it is allowed to keep on practising, and be identifiable by, central traits from the culture of origin” (Sander, 1990: 93). This definition helps to understand my participants because it does not focus on specific structural levels of integration but on a notion of acceptance. The structural or functional level of integration includes aspects such as housing, education or the labour market whereas I want to focus more on the socio-cultural integration. This focuses on issues of belonging, loyalties and identity (Erdal, 2013). The differentiation between a structural and a socio-cultural integration can nevertheless be useful when analysing the reflections migrants have about integration (ibid.). To return to Sander’s (1990) definition I want to examine the experiences of my participants regarding living their religion in the secular Swedish society. Integration has to be facilitated by the majority society as well but their understanding of integration can differ to that of immigrants. The conflict often arises when the minority group desires special legislation which is something Sweden has been traditionally very reluctant to grant (Borevi, 2013).

3.3.1 Multiculturalism and Assimilation

I want to examine the two terms, multiculturalism and assimilation, in relation to each other. These are two theories which are often discussed and represent the opposite strands of thoughts in discussions of integration (Rodriguez-Garcia, 2010). Multiculturalism was seen as a major strategy of achieving integration and Sweden was amongst the first to implement this into their policies in the 1970s (Borevi, 2013). Sander (1990) argues that Swedes did not understand that a requirement for multiculturalism is to accept diversity. He states that the majority of the society did not allow Muslims to organise, behave and live in a different way from the rest of the society. This can lead to a subjectively experienced threat of Muslims towards

their own religion and culture. I am aware that multiculturalism has been discussed extensively and researchers define it in various ways. For my research, the notion of diversity and preservation of one's culture and religion are of interest and how this idea of it is perhaps not as shared any longer especially in regard to Muslims (Bloemraad et al., 2008; Fowers & Richardson, 1996).

However, multiculturalism is not uniform and different degrees can be distinguished. Weak multiculturalism means that diversity is only recognised in the private sphere but not in the public sphere such as work and education (Rodriguez-Garcia, 2010). A strong form of multiculturalism includes the public sphere and for example provides support through legislation regarding religious freedom and worship or for the first language of immigrants (Rodriguez-Garcia, 2010). Sweden has always been very reluctant to give special legislation to groups and can thus be positioned mainly within weak multiculturalism. Fowers and Richardson (1996) also argue that sometimes multiculturalism actually increases the distance between social groups due to the fear of the minority group that too much contact with the majority culture perhaps leads to assimilation.

Hartmann and Gerteis (2005) argue that assimilation has been reconsidered by many scholars and explain how it might be structurally more necessary than minorities would want it to be. This is due to the importance of sharing feelings of solidarity and commonality. Nevertheless, assimilation requires the complete adoption of the values and rules of the majority population by the minority groups (Rodriguez-Garcia, 2010). This is not seen as necessary for integration by migrants (Erdal, 2013). Assimilation is based on the idea of a monoculture in which a distinction between majority and minority population is no longer possible (Rodriguez-Garcia, 2010). This is something minority groups are afraid of, to lose their own culture and religion. As a critique to this straight line assimilation, segmented assimilation arose which entails different subcategories. Portes and Zhou's (1993) theory is based on the American society and they distinguish three different paths immigrants can take. One is selective acculturation in which second-

generation immigrants preserve their parents' culture and values while achieving economic integration. Bloemraad's et al. (2008) definition of assimilation as a "narrowing of differences between immigrants and the native-born majority population in certain aspects of social life" (p. 163) can be understood in that way. This definition does not perceive assimilation as an absorbing force of the original culture but rather the integration of people into some social spheres such as the labour market while some specific cultural habits are kept, food preferences for instance (ibid.). This sounds straightforward but in this example the integration into the labour market might place a limit on specific religious behaviour such as daily praying. Furthermore, the difficulty is that immigrants are not given the chance to truly assimilate into the society since they are not viewed as having the same rights and are not granted the same privileges often until they are assimilated (Rodriguez-Garcia, 2010).

To conclude this section, I want to explore what Muslims subjectively understand as integration and what being integrated requires for them. The concepts of assimilation and multiculturalism will help to position the answers in the interviews and the results from the quantitative analysis. Moreover, through the answers of my participants I can draw conclusions regarding which approach immigrants tend to experience in Sweden. As indicated earlier the concept of multiculturalism is often wrongly understood by the majority society as assimilation. In the context of this I will examine if it is important for Swedes that Muslims adopt Swedish traditions and values which would point more towards assimilation than multiculturalism. This is a more traditional understanding of assimilation in terms of the absorption of a culture. On the other hand, the definition by Bloemraad et al. (2008) describes integration on a structural level but not necessarily on a socio-cultural level, which corresponds to the understanding of migrants in the study by Erdal (2013).

3.4 Social Integration Theory

As previous research has done, (see van Tubergen, 2007; Need & De Graaf, 1996) I will use Durkheim's (1951) social integration theory and apply it to the context of

immigration and religion. This means that social settings or groups in which people interact have an influence on the religious beliefs and practices (van Tubergen, 2007). Applied to my research it suggests that the more connected my participants feel to the secular Swedish society the more they conform to the norms of this society. Muslims who are less integrated on the other hand are less influenced by its secularity. The longer a Muslim has been in Sweden and has been part of the education system the more the secularity of the society had an impact on the person and thus I could imagine the less religious they are. On the other hand, according to Kelley and De Graaf (1997) the influence of a religious family is stronger in a secular society since the family sees the need to exert more control. Therefore, results in both directions could be expected and because I am exploring the experiences of Muslims other explanations for this will perhaps be found.

4. Methodology

This section will explain why I am using a mixed method approach and my qualitative and quantitative data will be addressed. The two methods will be presented separately including sampling, limitations and the type of method I chose.

4.1 Why a mixed methods approach?

I operationalised my research question through a mixed method approach which is based on Creswell (2015) and his understanding. This approach has the advantage of examining my research topic through a quantitative and a qualitative lens. Both data combined gave me more information about my research interest than either one alone could have given me. The mixed method design I used is the convergent design in which the quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed separately (Creswell, 2015). In the conclusion section of this paper both results will be combined and my overall research question will be answered.

One problem is that the collected data is not directly connected to the independently-collected data. Therefore, there are limited logical connections but

different units of analysis can still work, especially “when the intent of the convergent design is to compare different perspectives” (Creswell, 2015: 78) as it is in my case. I can use the quantitative data to show how Swedes view Muslims, which connects to my own data from a Muslim perspective. Another requirement in the convergent design are equal sample sizes. This is often not possible since this either means a very large qualitative sample which would go beyond the scope of this paper or a very small quantitative sample which cannot be used for a logistic regression. One solution according to Creswell (2015) is to simply accept these differences which I chose to do since both data types are investigating other groups and tell different stories. I aim to explore the reasons why Swedes rate their feelings towards Muslims in the manner they do. In my qualitative interviews, I want to explore the experiences of Muslims in the Swedish society and hear their stories regarding religion and integration. I then want to compare my quantitative and qualitative results and connect them. This will help me to answer my overall research question:

How does Muslims' religiosity in a secular society influence their subjective integration in Sweden and how does the perception of Muslims by Swedes connect to that?

4.2 Qualitative Data

For my qualitative data I conducted 8 semi-structured interviews with Muslims in Malmö. My qualitative study describes the common lived experiences of religion in a secular society and the experience of integration. With qualitative interviews, I gained a deeper insight into the thoughts and emotions Muslims connect with their religion and the secular Swedish society. For analysing my data I used the program NVIVO and I based my approach for coding on Saldana⁴ (2015). My first cycle of coding was holistic coding and had the aim to find basic themes in the data. Due to my theory I had an idea of my data and what to investigate. In a second cycle of

⁴ An overview of the identified codes can be found in the appendix.

coding my codes were put together when purposeful. After that I organised them according to my qualitative research questions. In order to examine my qualitative data I formulated some specific questions which addresses different aspects of interest. I want to explore generational differences between my participants regarding their religiosity and religious culture. Another question asks what integration means to my participants and whether they feel integrated in the Swedish society or not. The last question is going to address how my participants live and experience their religion in the secular Swedish society. Some Muslims might face negative experiences of living their religion due to the secularity of the society. This might be stronger for women because they are easier identified as a Muslim.

- *Are there generational differences depending on religiosity and religious culture and if so which?*
- *What does integration mean for religious Muslims and how integrated do they feel?*
- *How do Muslims live and experience their religion in the secular society of Sweden?*

4.2.1 Data selection, collection and interview technique

This chapter presents reasons for my data selection, the process of the collection and my interview technique. I decided to focus on Muslims because through their interviews I can to some extent also learn about the Swedish population's perception of them. There are some excluding criteria for the participants in my sample. Firstly, due to ethical and legal boundaries I only interviewed participants over 18. Furthermore, due to personal language restrictions the participants had to either speak English or Swedish. Since I want to explore the experiences of Muslims in the secular society it is only logical to include Muslims who have lived in Sweden since at least a few years. I aimed at having a balanced number of age groups, preferably a generation who came to Sweden as an adult and a generation who were born in Sweden or came as a child. I also wanted to have a balanced gender distribution in my sample to ensure different perspectives.

In order to find interview partners I contacted different mosques, organisations and researchers at Malmö and Lund university in order to have participants who can best help me to understand my research interest. During my work I also made use of snowball sampling and started from different strands at the beginning in order to avoid a homogenous group. Since I want to explore if Muslims face obstacles due to their religiosity I think it is more purposeful to have a heterogeneous sample because its aim is to identify “central themes which cut across the variety of cases or people” (Ritchie et al., 2003: 79). All of the interviews took place in Malmö over a time period of one month, ranging from March to April 2018. My final sample can be seen in table 1 and displays central information as well as new names I have given my participants in order to secure their anonymity and to allow the reader to follow the results easier. My participants took part in this study voluntarily and have not been reimbursed for their participation. All participants received a consent sheet⁵, which they signed, with information about their rights and received a copy. Before the interviews, the participants were informed that they had the right to not answer any question they did not want to answer. The participants were aware that they would be anonymous and that the interviews would be audio recorded. They also had the possibility to withdraw at any time during the research process, and were offered to read the finished thesis. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to two hours.

I chose to follow an in depth interviewing with an interview guide approach (Rossman & Rallis, 2016). The purpose of these types of interviews is to explore the participants worldview. Therefore, I produced topics beforehand which I explored further in my interviews. I formulated several questions but the order was not strict and during the interviews some questions were not asked since the participant addressed them him or herself and sometimes new question arose. This approach assumes that the phenomenon should be described by the participants

⁵ The English version of the consent sheet can be found in the appendix.

perspectives and not by the researcher (Rossman & Rallis, 2016). I view my interview data as in-depth and exploratory. I do not claim that my interviews are an authentic picture of my participants lives. With this I do not mean that I cannot gain anything from my interviews but that I cannot expect to uncover everything and that I have to view the information in a context.

Table 1: Overview of the interview participants

Name	Sex	Age	Years spent in Sweden	Country of Birth	Interview language	Date
Ahmed	Male	55	20	Tunisia	Swedish	10.03.
Omar	Male	49	20	Lebanon	Swedish	10.03.
Mariam	Female	39	9	Egypt	English (does not speak Swedish)	12.03.
Mohamed	Male	47	20	Algeria	Swedish	15.03.
Ali	Male	42	9	Pakistan	English (is learning Swedish)	16.03.
Malak	Female	29	29	Sweden	English (speaks fluent Swedish)	22.03.
Fatima	Female	28	28	Syria	Swedish	8.04.
Amal	Female	27	21	Sweden	English (speaks fluent Swedish)	9.04.

4.2.2 Limitation, internal validity and reflexivity

There are some limitations regarding my qualitative data. For example I was accompanied by a Swedish speaker to the interviews which were conducted in Swedish to ensure understanding between me and my participants. This was of

course agreed upon before and no participant had any concern with this. I am aware that this could have influences but I still asked the questions and led the interview. The second person was merely there to react to things the participant said that I perhaps missed due to a possible limited understanding.

General limitations of qualitative interviews can also range from the bias of the researcher's presence. I am aware that my participants might have answered in a way that they thought I wanted to hear because they feel that they represent Muslims and want to make sure I gain a positive picture. Of course cultural differences can occur as well but I emphasised very strongly before and during the interviews that I want to learn and understand Islam better. All my participants were very happy to talk about Islam and their practice and explained different aspects to me. Thus, even though Rossman and Rallis (2016) mention limits due to cultural differences, I did not experienced this as an obstacle in my interviews.

There is the need as a researcher to check for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures (Creswell, 2014). One way of ensuring validity is by using triangulation which means to collect data through different sources (Zohrabi, 2013). Even though my qualitative data only consist of interviews I am applying a mixed method approach and will also include quantitative data. This will give me another perspective of the topic I am looking at. Another way of increasing validity is to clarify the bias the researcher brings to the study (Creswell, 2014). Therefore I want to think about my role as a researcher and interviewer because it leads to a more reflected research process and also puts the interview into perspective and increases the awareness of possible influences. I am interviewing members of a religious minority in Sweden which is viewed negatively from a Western perspective. Just because I am not a native Swede I cannot expect to have similar experiences or understandings of the society. I am German and came to Sweden as a Master student which is viewed very differently than a Muslim seeking for example shelter in Sweden. Furthermore, my experiences are in the context of academia and mostly with other international students. Regarding power relations

between me and the participants I think that we were on a similar level. This is due to an age difference and my language skills in Swedish which are less extensive than those of my participants. My aim is to acknowledge the perspectives and structures that entail power relations between researcher and research. Another way to improve the validity is to present negative or discrepant information. Since my sample is very heterogenic and consist of different age groups and countries of origin there will be different information. This is of interest for my study and I want to discuss these differences and present explanations. Lastly, I used member check as a tool for validity (Creswell, 2014). This means I offered my participants the chance to read the transcriptions and to add things or tell me to change things if I understood something wrong. Regarding external validity my research is limited. This is due to my small number of participants but the aim of qualitative is not to generalise (Creswell, 2014). Rather the value lies in the description and development of themes from a specific perspective.

Another possible limitation of my data lies in the fact that I did not focus on one specific Muslim group. Since my participants are viewed as one group by the Swedish majority I argue that they share similar experiences (Alwall, 1998). In the Western world and sometimes by Muslim groups themselves, Muslims are perceived as a homogenous group (Roald, 2011). This is of course a false perception since there are very different religious orientations within Islam and many different Muslim countries. Nevertheless, Alwall (1998) explains that Muslims are distinguished by the majority population on the basis of their religion as one group. Therefore, I am aware that my sample is very heterogenic which is due to time constraints and difficulties accessing the field. Even though my participants are very different they still share the common identification as a Muslim and belonging to this group.

4.3 Quantitative Data

For the quantitative data analysis, I used the statistic program STATA version 13.1 and secondary data from PewResearch Centre. My methods include descriptive

statistics, bivariate tests and a logistic regression analysis using logits. The descriptive results will be presented in order to gain information regarding the sample. The bivariate analysis will examine my hypotheses. The first test will examine if there is a correlation between the feelings towards Muslims and the importance of traditions for Swedes. Here I expect a significant relationship since Swedes attach greater importance to their traditions than religion per se. Muslims bring their own traditions and customs with them which is harder for Swedes to accept. The second bivariate analysis will address if there is a significant relationship between the perception that Muslims want to integrate and the feelings towards Muslims. As explained Swedes did not always understand that diversity if needed for multiculturalism and thus I argue the distinctiveness of Muslim affects the rating towards them negatively. My logistic regression will explore which factors influence the feelings towards Muslims negatively. Within that the importance of religion as an independent variable will be included as well. Since Swedes belong to a secular society and religion does not play a very important role in their life I expect that there is no relationship.

Which factors, either positively or negatively, influence the feelings of Swedes towards Muslims?

- H1: The importance of traditions for Swedes is negatively correlated with feelings towards Muslims.
- H2: Swedes who think Muslims want to be distinct have more negative feelings towards them.
- H3: The importance of religion for Swedes does not influence their feelings towards Muslims negatively.

The assumptions for using a logistic regression are met such as a binary dependent variable, large sample size and making sure the model is right fitted. For the last aspect I conducted a model test in which one included all variables and the second was nested in it. The variables I excluded in the second model were the importance

of being a Christian since this is very similar to the importance of religion. I also excluded the importance of language since as will be seen in my descriptive results this is important to around 95% of the participants in the survey. Therefore, I did not expect that this influences the feelings towards Muslim. The results of the likelihood-ratio-test were statistically significant ($p = .0000$) and showed that the model including fewer variables is better. I also tested if there is strong multicollinearity between my independent variables which was not the case. The number of cases was adjusted to the variables included in the regression and had a total N of 881. The next step was to compute the average marginal effects in order to better analyse the results. The coefficients of the logistic regression can be found in the annex and the results of the average marginal effects can be seen in table 5.

4.3.1 Data collection, selection and limitations

My data for the quantitative part was taken from PewResearch Center and its survey about global attitudes from 2016. The sample consists of a total of 1000 Swedes from which 558 are male and 442 are female. The sample also includes 11 Muslim participants. These participants were excluded since I want to gain the perception of Swedes towards Muslims. The survey was conducted via telephone interviews. The questionnaire asked questions regarding integration and feelings towards immigrants. With the quantitative data, I want to gain information from the perspective of the Swedish population. This is due to several facts. Firstly, it could also have been interesting to look at information from Muslim participants but this group had an N of 11 which is too small for a quantitative analysis⁶. Secondly, I perceive that through face to face interviews with Swedish participants I would gain less information. As discussed by Zuckerman (2009) he observed in his qualitative study that Scandinavians avoid being rude or loud-mouthed and thus might be less open about their opinion. Furthermore, perceptions of immigrants especially Muslims are a sensitive topic and participants might want to give answers which are socially acceptable and politically correct. A telephone interview already makes

⁶ Other surveys such as the ESS 2016 also only entailed 45 Muslim participants.

the situation less personal since the participants feel more anonymous than in a face to face interview. With quantitative data I receive information from a larger group than I would have through interviews. With this I can ideally generalise my findings to the Swedish population. Since my aim is to examine the situation of Muslims in Sweden I think it is important to gain a general picture of the feelings and behaviour of the Swedish population towards Muslims. Nevertheless, quantitative data alone would in my view not meet the needs of my research topic.

Limitations of the quantitative data can derive from the mixed method approach since I cannot give the quantitative data as much space as it perhaps needs. Nevertheless, I included descriptive results, bivariate analysis and a logistic regression and therefore have different levels of engaging with my data. Internal and external validity threats to my data are all related to the participants and their selection as well as treatments and the bias due to the interviewer (Creswell, 2014). Since the analysis is based on existing data, I was limited in the creation of the variables to the survey questions. Ideally, I would have conducted the survey myself and could have controlled for these factors but due to time constraints and resources this was not possible. Furthermore, as stated before I refer to Swedes as non-Muslim ethnic Swedes without a migration background. However, for the sample in this study I can only confirm that the participants are living in Sweden, are non-Muslim and speak the Swedish language. Thus, some migration background could be present but I do not think this affects the results. Statistical conclusion validity can be threatened due to inaccurate inferences from the data due to the usage of incorrect statistical power or violation of statistical assumptions (Creswell, 2014). As discussed earlier the assumptions of the logistic regression were met. Since I used a logistic regression with a binary dependent variable it could be argued I lost information from the categorical variable. Therefore, I ran a regression with the dependent variable with its original categories. The results are similar except for age becoming not significant and education becoming significant.

4.3.2 Operationalisation

To start with, I reduced my data to only Sweden since other countries are not of interest for this study. An overview of the variables I used and their operationalisation can be found in table 2 and their distribution in table 3.

Dependent Variable

My dependent variable is how Swedes rate their feelings towards Muslims which contains two categories. Originally the variable included four items ranging from very favourable to very unfavourable, but these were reduced to favourable and unfavourable. This choice was made in order to be able to conduct a logistic regression analysis which makes the results easier to understand.

Independent Variables

I have several independent variables which I am including since I argue that they can influence the feelings towards Muslims. Different variables include what Swedes perceive is important to be truly Swedish. These are the importance of sharing traditions and customs, being a Christian and the importance of speaking the language as well as being born in Sweden. I argue that Swedes who find it important to share customs and traditions in order to be Swedish, have more negative feelings towards Muslims since their traditions differ. In line with the secularisation of Sweden I argue that being a Christian is not important for Swedes for being truly Swedish. The topic of language is always central when it comes to immigration and also occurred in my interviews. Even though there are no language requirements for formal citizenship I perceive that language is central for Swedes. The importance of religion for Swedes according to the secularisation theory should be very low and thus not affect feelings towards Muslims. All these variables contained the four items very favourable to very unfavourable and were reduced to binary variables. Another variable contains if Swedes think Muslims want to adopt to traditions and customs or if they want to be distinct or both.

Moreover, I included whether the participants are in favour of the right-wing party Sweden Democrats (Sverige Demokraterna). The party has an explicitly anti-immigration platform and anti-Islamic profile and was mentioned during my interviews (Fridolfsson & Elander, 2013). As Hjerm (2009) stated in his study about immigration in Sweden, right-wing parties are on average less supportive of multiculturalism. Thus, I expect that this has an influence on feelings towards Muslims. This is connected to the variable regarding Swedes opinion towards immigration and if it makes Sweden a better place, a worse place or if it makes no difference. Often during a bad economic situation, immigrants are viewed negatively since they pose a threat (Chandler & Tsai, 2001). Therefore, I include if the participants perceive Sweden in a good or bad economic situation. Education has been included in a wide range of studies towards anti-immigration sentiments and can be useful to explain the feelings towards Muslims as well (Hjerm, 2009). Therefore the continuous variable education has been included. Furthermore, as Hjerm (2009) stated in his study about anti-immigrant sentiments in Sweden, highly educated people feel less threatened by a large minority.

Control Variables

As control variables sex and age are included as has been done in other studies before (see Hjerm, 2009; Chandler & Tsai, 2001; Rydgren, 2008). Generally, older people show higher levels of anti-immigration sentiments (Hjerm, 2009). Nevertheless, the effect of age does not necessarily have to be linear and thus age² was also included in the regression which generates a quadratic curve. Regarding the influence of sex there are different opinions in research, but I follow Hjerm's (2009) argument that women feel less threatened by immigrants because their labour market situation is less exposed to competition.

Table 2: Overview of the variables used in the bivariate tests and logistic regression

	Variables (Label)	Type (Code)	Categories
DV	Rating of feeling towards Muslims (ratingmuslims)	Binary (0 1)	0 = favourable 1 = unfavourable
IV	Muslims integration (muslimsintegrate)	Ordinal (0 1 2)	0 = adopt customs 1 = both 2 = distinct
IV	Importance of traditions (imptrad)	Binary (0 1)	0 = unimportant 1 = important
IV	Importance of religion (impreligion)	Binary (0 1)	0 = unimportant 1 = important
IV	In favour of Sweden Democrats (partysd)	Binary (0 1)	0 = favourable 1 = unfavourable
IV	If immigration makes Sweden a better country (opimmigration)	Ordinal (0 1 2)	0 = no difference 1 = better 2 = worse
IV	Education in years (education)	Interval (0-30)	
IV	Perception of the economic situation of Sweden (economic)	Binary (0 1)	0 = good 1 = bad
Control	Sex (sex)	Binary (0 1)	0 = male 1 = female
Control	Age (age)	Interval (18-95)	

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Qualitative Data

This chapter is going to address both the results of my interviews and at the same time analyses the data. The reason for the combination of both is that it allows the reader to easier follow the findings and connections made to the theory. At the beginning of this paper three questions have been proposed for my qualitative data. Through connecting the codes of the qualitative data to these questions each will be answered in the following sections and my results will be presented at the same time. All quotes from the interviews conducted in Swedish have been translated into English. Grammatical errors have been retained which can be seen through the sic at the end of the quote.

5.1.1 Generational differences of Muslims regarding their religiosity and religious culture

This chapter explores generational differences regarding my participants religiosity and religious culture. My participants can be divided into second-generation Muslim immigrants such as Malak, Fatima and Amal and first-generation Muslim immigrants such as Ahmed, Omar, Mariam, Mohamed and Ali. Within this group there is a difference regarding the length of time spent in Sweden between Ahmed, Omar and Mohamed who have been in Sweden for about 20 years and Mariam and Ali who are living in Sweden since 9 years.

Religiosity

Four dimensions have been mentioned in the theory regarding Muslim religiosity namely identification, religious practices, religious belief and secular consequences (El-Menouar, 2014; Glock, 1962). A quote from Amal which is typical of all my participants is: *“I would describe myself as religious and practising Islam”*. They all either use the word religious directly or describe themselves as a practising Muslim which captures the identification dimension.

The second dimension is religious practices, which can be distinguished from devotion and ritual. As rituals all my participants mention fasting during Ramadan and the celebration at the end of it. The daily prayers to God are an aspect of devotion which is expressed during my interviews as well. Both aspects are found in Mariam's answer who says *"I think I am a practitioner because I pray five times a day, I fast Ramadan the whole Ramadan"*(sic).

Some participants emphasise that these daily prayers are not a must, but they nevertheless strive to fulfil them. Malak, Mariam and Amal in particular stress the importance of praying five times per day and Malak and Amal emphasise the difficulties with it. This difficulty could be because they both grew up in a non-Muslim country whereas Mariam grew up in Egypt and the inclusion of the daily prayers is a larger part of the religious society. Malak's quote shows that the prayers are important for her personally and not for God but she still feels shame if she cannot do them. The usage of the word ashamed is interesting since it implies a wrong doing even though she stresses she only does the prayers for herself. It also shows how important her religious practice is for her.

"I believe not only like you have to pray five times a day because God doesn't need our prayers we need them. So that's my philosophy so when I get sloppy with prayers I feel ashamed."(sic)
Malak

Secular consequences capture how religious norms influence the daily lives of my participants and can be seen as religiosity itself. My participants mention all of the following: eating halal food, no consumption of alcohol and donating the zakat. None of my male participants followed the practice of not shaking the hand of the opposite sex when we met. The adherence of this norm would stand out in Sweden since it is not a common practice there due to its emphasis on gender equality.

The dimension of religious belief is difficult to observe since it refers to the unquestioning belief in God and the Quran. This is something very personal and it is thus hard to accurately verify if a person possesses it. However both aspects are

mentioned throughout the interviews and when Ali explains: “*and we understand the Quran in a way that if we want to connect to the God almighty*” (sic) he makes explicit mention of God as an all-powerful being.

Amal and Malak are both religious but still question Islam. Amal says that the Quran would not be interpreted in the same way by a woman which shows an awareness of how religion could be influenced by male perspectives. This awareness could have been shaped by growing up in the Swedish society with its emphasis on gender equality. Nevertheless, she does not blame Islam itself but rather people. For Malak the aspect of common sense is very important and that you continuously question your way of living and the practice of your religion. However, she also mentions that not everyone holds this view. Thus, both women seem to practice and relate to their religion in a different way than other Muslims, as seen from Malak’s quote: “*When I grow up, there were a lot of Muslims that talked about well God is going to throw you in hell because you didn't do this and this*” (sic). This could be an indication that the second generation relates differently to their religion in the sense that they question religious norms and practices more than the first generation. This can be also seen in the conversation I had with Amal and Malak about visiting the mosque, which neither do in Sweden. For Malak this is partly because some mosque are very conservative and she referred to the WAKF mosque which is where Omar prays. For Amal it is more of a habit but she also says that she would not raise her children to go to some of the mosques. This shows that her idea of Islam and her practice must differ strongly to that of other Muslims in Sweden since she adds that you never know what ideas some Muslims spread there.

In conclusion, through applying the concept of religiosity I could discuss my participants relation to their religion and identify generational differences. All my participants, both first and second-generation immigrants, describe themselves as religious Muslims who follow similar religious practices. El-Menouar (2014) defines religious belief in the context of Muslim religiosity as the unquestioned belief in Allah and the Quran. Therefore, the second-generation participants Malak

and Amal stand out since they stress how they question their religion and practice and thus relate differently to their religion than the other participants. The reasons for this can be various, such as family background, education or friends and it would be speculation to identify one cause but it can be kept in mind that this differentiates them from the first generation.

Values connected to Islam and to Sweden

During the interviews my participants and I also discuss which values they connect to Sweden and to Islam. These concepts were originally separate but were in the second round of coding combined due to the interesting fact that when participants are asked about values connected to Sweden they often refer to Islam and vice versa. This shows that my participants perceive Islam and Sweden as very similar regarding values compared to Swedes who think Islam cannot coexist with Swedish values (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2011). For example when asked about Swedish values Mariam says:

“Well some of the values actually correspond to my religious beliefs like being honest, being transparent, being like, treat people equally all of those things are rooted in Islam.” (sic)
Mariam

Participants also underline the importance of equality in Sweden and how this is very central to Islam as well. Some participants such as Amal says that the values of Islam are not lived much in Islamic countries and that Sweden is more Islamic in that sense. Malak agrees with Amal and for her Swedish and Islamic values are the same. One example of these shared values in Islam and Sweden is how the practice of donating money in Islam was equated with the Swedish taxes and the welfare system since Malak says:

“In Sweden we have the skatt the taxes and skatt comes from the word zakat (...) and we have the welfare system in Sweden and that’s more Islamic than there are in the other countries.” (sic)
Malak

Other participants also mention this connection and express the idea that the word skatt comes from zakat. This misconception is interesting because it shows how my participants are trying to find connections between their religion and the Swedish society. Both quotes show that the participants feel that Swedish and Islamic values are similar. It was important for Malak to convey that Islam is a religion of common sense and not as strict as it is often portrayed. Thus, she is aware of the perception of Islam in Western Europe as strict and perhaps wants to emphasise a more positive picture. This I could also identify for Omar since he says that Islamic values are the same as in other religions and Islam has no force nor control. Today, the picture of Islam in the Western world is often accompanied by the idea of force towards Muslim women because the hijab has become a sign of gender inequality.

Before Mohamed moved to Sweden his picture of the country was more positive than today and he associated aspects such as human rights and respect with it. However, since moving he seems to have had negative experiences regarding these values because he tends to be more critical of Sweden compared to the other participants. He implies that respect and human rights in Sweden are not lived to the same extent as is portrayed abroad.

The take away from this section is that my participants see no conflict between Swedish and Islamic values and instead consider them to be the same. This stands in contrast to the Swedish perception that Islam cannot coexist with Swedish values (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2011). The second-generation participants in particular try to connect their religion to Swedish values which is in accordance to Roald's (2013) study. The first generation is more negative regarding Swedish values and stress that the values of all religions are the same but did not specify more. I argue that the reason my participants stress that Islam is neither strict nor forceful is because this is precisely how it is often portrayed in Western discourses. Thus, there might be a tendency to promote a more positive picture of Islam in contrast to its primarily negative media portrayal.

Religious Culture

This chapter will apply the concept of religious culture and within that whether social order and religion should be separated or the same according to my participants as well as their religious legacy. None of my participants explicitly state that religion and social order should be the same and can thus not be positioned within integrism. According to Mohamed's personal observation a growing part of the Swedish population wants religion to play a bigger role in society, which in his opinion would be something positive. This observation stands in contrast to the literature and his assessment of it as something positive shows that he sees limits in the value of secularity. When asked directly if religion should play another role in society he answers with yes but also adds that he is not in Sweden to change the secular status quo. He thinks that religion can encourage people to think more about morals and ethics. An example of this is when he says that "*religions can make people think more about morals and ethics, how to behave, think a little more human as well*" (*sic*). One possible conflict with the wider Swedish society inherent in this idea is that it implies non-religious people have less ethics or morals than religious people.

In Ali's opinion, religion has the possibility of playing an important and positive role in society and he believes that historically this has always been the case. For him, religion taking a bigger part in society means more responsibility. Religions give people the laws to act in a good way, for example taking care of your family and showing respect. In his opinion, these aspects are missing in secular laws and without them the goals of people would revolve around self-interest. He says that "*in secular laws we cannot make any laws that you should respect your parents*" (*sic*). This is a negative perception of secular societies and again implies less moral behaviour. He explains that people behave in a way that makes God happy, which contradicts to Malak's earlier explanation since she does prayers for herself and not God. However, Malak agrees with the notion that what you get from religion is the aspect of taking care of your parents. Nevertheless, she would not change the secular laws because in her opinion democracy is the best of the worst. Amal has

no issue with the secularity of the society but would also welcome a more religious society even in a Christian way. This is because she could then share her belief with more people. Sometimes she feels sorry because there is no belief in Sweden and explains that this can be hard as a believer. This connects in a different way to the theory in which Hartmann and Gerteis (2005) argue that assimilation is necessary due to the importance of sharing feelings of solidarity and commonality. These shared feelings can also be found in religion and thus it could be argued that a religious society would better support the inclusion of religious minorities. Nevertheless, both participants can be positioned within sectarianism because religion guides their life in society.

To summarise this aspect of the political function of religion, differences between the second-generation immigrants Amal and Malak and between the first-generation Mohamed and Ali can be found. Where the first two explain that the secularity of the society is something positive even though it would be nice to share their belief in God with more people the latter criticise the secularity more strongly. Both Mohamed and Ali say that in their view secularity entails less moral behaviour, which the non-religious Swedish majority would disagree with. This perception of behaving less ethically or morally good because you are not religious could lead to issues between both groups. Fatima's and Mariam's perception of religion is more in accordance to the Swedish perception of religion as something private as seen by Demerath (2000).

Through applying the concept of religious legacy I can position participants either as more traditionalist or modernist. My second-generation Muslim immigrants such as Malak and Amal stressed the flexibility of Islam and the common sense aspect. They adapt their religious behaviour when needed, for instance praying at home or attending events where alcohol is served. Therefore, Amal can be positioned more in terms of being a modernist because she states herself that her family is very modern and did not keep practices for the sole reason of tradition. Malak also reinterprets her religion in the context of the modern society. She tells

me how she tries to question her religion and tries to eat ecological halal meat because halal meat produced in mass factories is not actually halal. This is in accordance to the theoretical framework that second-generation Muslim immigrants try to reinterpret their religion in the context of modern society. Therefore, both can be positioned in a religious culture more connected to the Swedish society than other participants.

To conclude this section all my participants, both first and second-generation immigrants, identify as religious Muslims. They also follow the same religious practices and norms. Therefore, my results did not confirm the social integration theory insofar as my participants are not less religious in order to comply with the secularity of the society. Immigration is also not a theologizing experience (Smith, 1987) for my first-generation participants since their religious belief has not intensified since coming to Sweden according to them. I find the reasoning of Massey and Higgins (2011) more persuasive in the sense that my first-generation participants kept their religious belief but perhaps adapted some behaviour due to the secularity of the country which does not mean that they are less religious. However, I was able to identify a difference of religious belief between the generations since Malak and Amal stress how they question their religion.

Differences regarding the religious culture between my participants can be observed and it can be said that none of them wants religious law to supersede Swedish laws. In general, Mohamed has the strongest opinion regarding the positive role religion can have in society and he also expresses a desire for it to be more included. He and Ali perceive religion as a source to adhere to social norms such as respect and caring for your family and this source is in their opinion missing in a secular society. Their perception of religion can be connected to Fox (2018) who explains how religion can be a form of social control. For Amal this is not the reason for more religion to be included in the Swedish society. Instead, she wishes that she could share this part of her with the country she lives in to a greater extent than today. Regarding religious legacy it can be seen that the second generation

tries to reinterpret religion in the context of modern society. Nevertheless, none of the other participants behave or express thoughts that can be seen as highly traditional. Only Malak describes the mosque which Omar visits as conservative which shows that she sees herself as more modern compared to other Muslims and therefore it can be argued that Omar might be more traditional than Malak. The generational influences can be seen in the way that even though if participants spent a similar amount of time in Sweden, such as Malak and Omar, it has an effect if they were born here or came as an adult on their relation to their religion and the Swedish society.

5.1.2 What integration means for religious Muslims

This chapter is going to address the subjective integration of my participants. In regard to this it will also be explored what my participants think about the role of religion in the integration process. Lastly, how accepted my participants feel by the secular Swedish society will be presented before the overall question will be answered.

Subjective Integration

The answer regarding how my participants define integration can be divided into two parts. The first one refers to assimilation and multiculturalism and the second to the role you have in society. When Omar is asked what integration means to him he explains that to assimilate is one thing but to integrate is another. His quote captures his idea of integration.

“Integration is that you live in a society, you feel a part of it, you feel that the community cares about you and you work and contribute to building this.”(sic)
Omar

This is for him the foundation of integration but in order to achieve this, mutual respect is needed as well as a positive signal from the host country. In his definition he emphasises that integration means you feel part of a society which connects to a

notion of socio-cultural integration which entails the aspect of belonging (Erdal, 2013). He sees himself as being integrated and adds that he works, takes care of his patients and educates his children to care about the place you live in. The discussion whether he is integrated or not disturbs Mohamed and if this point would be resolved, that would be integration for him. He also explains that the trend in society is to connect integration to assimilation. This endorses the idea which was mentioned in the theoretical framework section that the understanding of integration perhaps differs between immigrants and host society. He continues to say that there are some aspects such as finding work which are needed for integration. For Ali integration does not mean that immigrants are supposed to be exactly as the majority society in order to be integrated. This connects to the classic understanding of assimilation in which the majority and minority group cannot be distinguished. He says that the majority society sometimes has demands such as Muslim women not wearing the hijab but for him integration does not involve everyone dressing the same. Ali makes a valid point since women should be able to decide what to wear and this should not affect their integration.

Mariam says that she does not speak Swedish and could therefore be seen as not fully integrated. Thus, language and integration are perceived as interwoven with each other. Nevertheless, she continues to say that she is aware of cultural differences, of different social norms and religious beliefs. She has the feeling that the society understands the “others” and that it is aware of what kind of differences exist between human beings, especially regarding foreigners who live in Sweden. This points to an experience of multiculturalism in which the majority society accept diversity. It also shows her awareness of the differences between Sweden and Arabic countries and that this is part of her integration. For Amal integration means that she can act without being judged by others. She explains that she is very open towards people who ask her question about her religion out of curiosity. If they ask for other reasons that is where her integration ends since it is not their concern. Her choice of words is very interesting since it can be argued if integration can really end. The experience of feeling judged or asked about Islam in a negative

way shows Amal that from the perspective of the majority population, she is not integrated. Amal has not faced any issues regarding her professional life and tells me that:

*“Sometimes I don't want to say it out loud but if I could get two jobs I mean
and not only get two jobs reach very good positions within my jobs
why wouldn't someone else be able to do that?” (sic)
Amal*

She is aware that she should not think in that way and just because it has worked for her does not mean that it works for other people. Nevertheless, this shows that in her view integration is possible in Sweden and she strongly connects it to a structural level of integration without giving up your religion. It also stresses her view that perhaps oneself bears special responsibility for integration. Malak's narrative shows that her idea of integration is strongly influenced by her parents who wanted to assimilate but still keep their religion. This connects to the definition by Bloemraad et al. (2008) in which integration for instance into the labour market should not be accompanied by an abandonment of the religion and was possible for Malak and her family. For her that is possible and she mentions her mother as an example since she educated herself and studied in Sweden. Amal also finds it important to participate in Swedish celebrations in order to be part of the society and to be integrated. This is also something her parents emphasised as long as the children knew these were not their religious celebrations. She says that *“They [her parents] wanted us to feel like part of the Swedish society”*. Thus, the families of both Amal and Malak supported at least some degree of assimilation into the Swedish society without losing their religion. This can be seen as an reinforcement of the argument by Hartmann and Gerteis (2005) that assimilation might be more necessary than immigrants recognise.

The second part of defining integration shows how my participants connect the idea of integration with the role you have in society. Fatima's definition focuses on one's voice is being heard, being able to participate in the society and affect the situation

of a country. Ahmed defines integration as having a role in the community and to be active and positive. For Ali integration means to share the good aspects of the society and to have the same positive things the majority group has. For him these positive aspects are very practical ones such as being on time, have holidays and going out. The following quote shows his definition of integration.

*“Integration means you try to be the positive or healthy part of your society.
Pay your taxes, follow the laws and be a good citizen whatever way
and try to protect your country.” (sic)
Ali*

This idea of integration includes the efforts of the migrants as much as of the host society. In the theory part it was explained how Swedes do not always allow Muslims to organise and behave in a different way. These ideas of integration show that my participants want to take an active role in the Swedish society and participate without having to give up their religion.

In conclusion, my participants do not perceive assimilation as necessary for integration, similar to Erdal’s (2013) study. Nevertheless, I still identify a difference between the answers of the first and second-generation immigrants since the latter placed more emphasis on their own role in the integration process whereas the first generation stresses that the Swedish society has to contribute as well. Some participants connect integration to the role you can assume in society but since Swedes according to Sander (1990) did not allow Muslims to organise, behave and live in a different way this might be more difficult.

Religion and Integration

This section discusses if religion hinders or helps integration into the Swedish society according to my participants. This is crucial to explore since, as seen by the study of Foner and Alba (2008), the Western European perspective is that religion is a hindrance for integration. For Ahmed, Mohamed and Omar religion helps you to integrate yourself. Ahmed adds that religion can become an obstacle for integration if you *“lock yourself into the actual religion”*. Thus, there are some

limitations for Ahmed whereas Mohamed and Omar emphasise only positive aspects.

The second-generation immigrants mention how religion can be a hindrance in Sweden but also that it not necessarily has to be. Amal says that she is integrated and religious at the same time and that it is possible if you want to. This suggest that integration depends considerably on the effort of the migrant. Nevertheless, she also says that there are aspects of Islam such as not drinking alcohol which could make integration harder in a country such as Sweden. She has never drunk any alcohol but she does attend for example work events where alcohol is served, which is not allowed in Islam. Amal concludes that it would be a bit more difficult to integrate if she was stricter but she does not see it as an actual obstacle. For her being traditional might hinder integration more than being religious but there are still very traditional people who say that they are integrated according to her. She says that old traditions such as women working at home or having stricter rules for girls than for boys would make it more difficult to integrate. It is interesting that she describes this behaviour as old traditions. As a second-generation Muslim immigrant she grew up in an environment where these traditions and ideas are not embraced but frowned upon. The traditions which Amal describes as old might be still present for some first-generation Muslim immigrants in Sweden which can lead to difficulties for them to integrate. On the other hand she stresses that her family is modern and thus the family background has as much influence on this.

Thus, compared to the perception of religion and integration in Western Europe my participants generally do not perceive religion as a hindrance for integration and instead think that it helps. The second generation mentions that some practices could influence integration negatively but also stress that they do not have to. Amal mentions that rather than being religious, being traditional is actually the greater obstacle for integration.

Acceptance

In relation to integration the notion of acceptance can also be useful when discussing the research question. Omar, Mariam, Ali, Malak and Amal say that they feel accepted in Sweden but added some conditions. Mariam feels that she is accepted in Sweden but reminds me that she works in academia and therefore according to her perhaps with more educated and open-minded people. Because of this, she cannot generalise to the whole society but it suggests that she thinks not every environment is as accepting as hers. Amal also says that she feels accepted and stresses that this is the difference between her and many other people which indicates that she is more of an exception. Malak as well as her parents feels accepted in Sweden. Only Mohamed says that he does not feel completely accepted in Sweden but this does not bother him. He refers to the debates in media, certain political parties and how it feels that they are trying to take away the human aspect of Muslims in order to dehumanise them. This feels very unpleasant for him but it does not affect him greatly and he simply feels that he has to be a bit stronger. This narrative sounds contradictory since he mentions a negative emotional experience but dismisses it easily and concludes he just needs more strength. This perhaps points to an resigned attitude regarding the negative portrayal of Muslims.

Even though my participants generally feel accepted some of their experiences point towards a non-acceptance by the Swedish majority. Fatima, Malak and Omar mention how they themselves or their children are still being asked about their country of origin even though they speak fluent Swedish and are born here. Malak often receives the question regarding her origin, due to her veil and appearance, which is something that bothers her since it is not the generation of her mother when immigration was a newer phenomenon. Thus, there is a discrepancy between the expressed perception of acceptance by my participants and their actual experiences in the Swedish society. To connect to the concept of integration presented in this paper it can be said that the majority population does not completely accept the visibly different group (Sander, 1990).

I now want to answer the question regarding what integration means for my participants. When connecting this to my theory it is quite evident that my participants define integration on a structural level and not on a socio-cultural level. This means you should be part of the labour market, speak the language and educate yourself. It does not mean that immigrants have to assimilate, as concluded in the study by Erdal (2013) as well. Mohamed and Omar criticise the tendency of the society to connect integration to assimilation which for them is not what integration means. Ali gives the specific example of clothing and the demands of the majority society that Muslim women should not wear the hijab. This again shows how religious and cultural diversity is not completely accepted in Sweden. The second-generation immigrants also do not think that it is necessary to give up your own religion and culture but still stress that it is important to be a part of the society and take part in their celebrations. For Malak and Amal as well as their parents the preservation of the religion is more important than to keep specific traditions. This could point towards an selective acculturation in which they achieve economic integration while preserving their parents religion. As explained by Amal her family did not necessary keep aspects deriving from their culture if there is no religious meaning behind it. This also stands in contrast to Roald's (2012) findings namely that many Muslims show great attachment to cultural patterns from their home country. However, the second-generation Muslims home country is Sweden and Roald also argues that this need derives from an experience of powerlessness, which I could not identify in the second-generation participants.

Since my participants feel accepted in Sweden it could be argued that the pluralistic approach is still present. However, I argue diversity is only accepted to a certain extend since my participants are still being asked about their origin even though they are born in Sweden. Therefore, the acceptance of Swedish people who do not look "Swedish" or dress in a specific way is not normality. This could also point towards a normalization of negative behaviour for my participants since it does not affect their perception of acceptance.

5.1.3 How Muslims live and experience their religion in the secular Swedish society

This section will present different concepts identified in the interviews which help to examine the question regarding how Muslims live and experience their religion in the secular Swedish society. Different aspects of my participants lives in Sweden will be discussed such as negative experiences as well as their perception of religious freedom and what has been expressed about the societies secularity. After presenting the concepts and what the participants revealed during the interviews the question will be answered.

Secular Society

Before discussing religious freedom I want to present what my participants think about the secular Swedish society. This concept entails references my participants made to the secular Swedish society and if this impacts their religious practice. Mariam emphasises her positive experiences in the Swedish society and how her surrounding is supportive and accepts her belief and therefore avoids serving alcohol or visiting places that do so. Discussions about her religion at her work place are always respectful according to her. She concludes that she has no negative experiences with the non-religious majority but stresses how her environment is mainly within academia where people might be more educated and open-minded according to her.

*They [her friends] understand, they appreciate your keen respect for your own believe so they also respect you in that manner.” (sic)
Mariam*

Amal experiences in the field of academia differ to those of Mariam. When Amal studied in Lund she did not feel very welcomed. She explains that perhaps it was because the students have not had much previous contact with Muslims and were scared of crossing boundaries. Thus, even though she is born in Sweden because of her religion she perhaps experiences a different treatment from her own society. Generally, Amal prevents herself from getting into discussions about faith

with the non-religious majority. For her, these conversations never reach a goal since no person is willing to change their position and it is difficult to explain your belief to a non-believer. However, she tells me that she never felt different in the Swedish society and she accepts questions about her religion deriving from curiosity. In relation to living her religion in the secular Swedish society Malak says that you have to argue for it with common sense and cannot simply explain your behaviour and choices by referring to the rules of your religion. In general she does not feel it is hard living in the secular society expect for when she was in school. This connects to the study by Kelley and De Graaf (1997) since Malak explains how her parents were stricter than other parents. If they would have lived in a country where her parents actions were the same as everybody else's it would have been easier. This points to a stronger religious control by her family to avoid the perceived negative influences of the secular environment

Amal can compare the secular Swedish and Arabic society since she lived six years in Dubai. She mentions that she enjoys being in Dubai where religion plays a significant role in society and many women wear the hijab. However, she feels more comfortable and at home in Sweden due to the emphasis placed on human rights. Therefore, human rights are something very central and important to Amal which is in accordance with Roald (2012). Nevertheless, she adds that in her opinion Sweden has not moved as fast as other countries like the UK. She believes that there is a higher visibility of Muslim women wearing the hijab at work places even though the relative percentage of the Muslim population is lower than in Sweden⁷. However, she thinks Sweden has started to change in that direction but there is still something to work on. Omar stresses that he has both religious and non-religious friends and that religion was never an issue between them. He still wishes to see more cooperation and collaboration between religious and non-religious people since it benefits both.

⁷ This is based on an estimation by the PewReserach Center in 2017. The relative Muslim population in Sweden is 8.1% whereas it is 6.3% in the UK.

The secular Swedish society has been presented as very positive by my participants. This can be explained through the findings by Zuckerman (2012) since he states that Scandinavian secularity is non-reactive and therefore more agnostic and mundane. Consequently, I could not identify negative experiences from the perspective of my participants solely based on them being religious and the majority being secular. Nevertheless, negative experiences or limitations of religious freedom deriving from being a Muslim relate to a different aspect as will be seen in the next chapter.

Religious Freedom

Religious freedom can be strongly connected to the experiences of living your religion in the secular Swedish society. In the following section the equality between religions in Sweden will be discussed as well as the dimension of freedom to act according to one's belief and freedom from discrimination.

One of the main concerns my participants express is the equal treatment of different religions. Omar mentions that there is religious freedom in Sweden on a theoretical but not on a practical level. He explains that even though he is free to live his religion there is still an enormous resistance against building mosques which in turn limits his religious freedom. This indicates that Christian religious symbols are more present and accepted in Sweden. He continues to discuss the minaret of a mosque and how this in his opinion is the same as church bells which ring several times per week. The public discussions and efforts against the building of Islamic symbols could strengthen the perception of Muslims that their religion is treated secondary (Foner & Alba, 2008). Nevertheless, the comparison between minarets and the church bells is complex. Aspects such as loudness should be taken into consideration and there is a higher resistance towards minarets than mosques for example due to the reason that a religious message is being forced onto others⁸. For

⁸ This was for example the case in the city of Växjö where the building of a mosque was allowed but not the minaret. The author of the article argues that religious freedom also means that no

Ali not all religions are given the same rights because Christianity is the traditional religion in Sweden which can be seen in his quote. The impact of the strong Christian tradition present in Sweden has been also mentioned by Casanova (2007).

“Religious freedom is there for all religions equally not for one religion because it’s a traditional religion here because in [the year] 2000 they have separated state and church. So there is no traditional religion left for the state now, for the state all religions are equal now.” (sic)
Ali

On the other hand he mentions that it is possible to live your religion freely in Sweden. This must be very noticeable for him due to his personal experiences of facing hostility in Pakistan because he belongs to the Ahmadiyya group which often faces harassment from other Muslims. I connect this to Roald’s (2012) findings and argue that both Omar and Ali experience powerlessness which in turn creates a higher need for visible traits of their religion in the public space for example for minarets. This critique of favouritism connects to what Kymlicka (1995) says since he argues for more measures that guarantees minorities an equal status.

For Mariam Sweden is a very secular society in which everyone is free to belong to different religions but she is unsure regarding their equality. She says that *“on a personal level I think it’s fine to practice your religion in the Swedish society”*. By not mentioning the public level she implies that it is perhaps not so easy to express her religion publicly. This is perhaps because of Sweden’s secularity of which one aspect is the privatisation of religion (Jänterä-Jareborg, 2010).

Another concern which arose in relation to religious freedom was the dimension to act according to one's belief. Aspects such as halal food, daily praying and religious holidays are mentioned and will be discussed in this order. Mohamed meets limits regarding his religious practices in his daily life. He names the example of having to check which restaurants serve halal food. He perceives this as a limitation but it

religious message should be forced on someone which is the case with a minaret (Heberlein, 2018).

can be questioned if the expectation that restaurants serve halal food is reasonable. In contrast to that finding shops or restaurants with halal food is very easy in Mariam's opinion. One big problem Mohamed mentions is his children's school, which does not serve halal food. Therefore they have to eat the vegetarian option and this can, according to him, have consequences such as concentration issues. When discussing this during the interview with Ali he is surprised and says that the school which his children attend has a halal food option. This was the case even in Luleå, a city in the far north of Sweden, where he lived before moving to Malmö. These different perceptions could be simply due to different schools but it also seems that Mohamed has a more critical view on this topic.

Another aspect regarding acting according to your belief are daily prayers. Amal, Malak and Ahmed have no problems with combining work and prayers since they can reschedule them. Mariam explains how she uses the coffee breaks at work as time for her prayers and the quiet rooms at work as space. Therefore, it is not a big hassle for her to pray at work, but it is different when she is in the city since there are only two mosques which are far in the outskirts. Subsequently, she plans her trips and days in order to manage her prayers or reschedules them for when she is at home. Generally, Mariam says that she has no problems practising her religion in Sweden. This seems contradictory because she says that she has to plan her days which is a big adjustment but she does not seem to perceive this in any way as a constraint on her religious freedom.

The last topic which occurred while discussing acting according to one's belief are Muslim celebrations. In Mariam's view it is no problem to use your holiday for Muslim celebrations. She tells me how she has had very understanding employers in Sweden who knew when Muslim holidays were and understood that she would arrive later or take the day off. She makes it clear that work is the highest priority and her practice should not interfere with that. She says that sometimes Muslim holidays are included in Swedish calendars which gives her a nice feeling. This can be seen as a step to equalise different religions and include minority groups more

in Sweden. Malak also mentions that today Muslim holidays receive more attention and celebration in Sweden compared to when she grew up here. Amal has never thought about the idea that Muslim holidays should become official because she can still celebrate them and take a day off. Her quote shows that she completely accepts that Sweden has its own traditions and religious background which shapes the society even though it is secular. She as well as Mariam would not demand more public recognition of Islam because Sweden is traditionally Christian.

*“I can't expect from a country that is not Muslim originally
I mean than we would have to take holidays for all the,
I mean where would the limit be?” (sic)
Amal*

The last dimension is the freedom from discrimination based on religion. This is being addressed in my interviews in the context of work and clothing. Malak and Mohamed mention stories about women who could not work at a company because they would have to stop wearing their hijab. On the other hand, Malak tells me how Sweden has changed in that regard since for example hospitals now have veils produced as a as a part of their medical uniform⁹. As explained before it is legal to ban religious symbols at the workplace in Europe which is a disadvantaged for Muslim women in particular. Mohamed tells me that there are people that do not understand why Muslim women would not take a job because of restrictions on their clothing, but for him it is a very strong belief which they want to follow. This can be explained through the strong secularity of the Swedish society in which people might not be able to understand the importance of religion for believers. Ahmed mentions that he felt that at some point he was treated with less respect at his workplace because he looks foreign but otherwise never felt discriminated. For Omar, one of the many difficulties in Sweden is the work life. He tells me about his internship in Sweden in the 90s where he did a good job but was told that they could only hire him if he changes his name. It is interesting that he uses an example from

⁹ This ruling, compared to Stockholm where workers can wear their own personal veils, is still constraining (Mirsch, 2012).

around 20 years ago. This points either towards a decreasing experience of discrimination for him at the workplace or that this experience, understandably, is still very vivid and negative for him. To summarise, the experiences of discrimination based on religion at the workplace were mostly stories of other Muslims but not experiences made by my participants. Therefore, structural discrimination has not been experienced extensively by my participants.

The most prevalent aspect of discrimination based on religion in my interviews are the experiences of Muslim women wearing the hijab. Malak says that she never got bad comments from people regarding her religion or ethnic background. When talking more in depth she mentions a negative situation when someone told her and her friend to “*go back to your home country*”. They laughed about the situation since they were both born in Sweden and felt sorry for the man. This information is contradictory and could point towards a downplaying of negative experiences by her or a normalization of these encounters. Amal says that she does not have many negative experiences either. In the course of the interview she does mention a negative encounter with a man who she was having an argument with over his dog who said “*this is my dog it’s my religion (...) go back to your country you fucking Muslim*” (sic). This incident did shock her very much and shows how an argument can be escalated because of her identification as a Muslim. Fatima is a bit more direct about negative experiences. She lived in Malmö for a long time where she felt safe in her limited circle but when she moved to Södra Sandby which is a small village near Lund the situation changed. There she has been spat at by others while walking in the streets. The following quote represents her experiences well and shows the strong impact these encounters have on her daily life:

*“ I have 7 minutes walk [to work] but I drive since I don't dare to walk here in the village because you get harassed or so.”(sic)
Fatima*

Therefore, the aspect of religious freedom of being able to live your religion publicly and privately can also be questioned by these experiences (Alwall, 1998).

The male participants only tell me about examples of discrimination in their environment but not experienced by themselves. Mohamed has personally not had any negative experiences since he came to Sweden but he, as well as Omar, mention experiences from their surroundings. He tells me about his wife who wears the hijab and that she has been spat on by people on her way to the kindergarten. He continues to say that these incidents have become normalised and that therefore Muslim women do not report them to the police. Omar adds that some of the women do not leave the house or go to work when there has been a terror attack somewhere in the world because they are scared of harassment.

In general my participants agree that there is religious freedom in Sweden. They criticise the lack of equality between different religions and Omar and Ali argue that Christianity should not be prioritised simply because it is the traditional religions in Sweden. For Mariam and Amal this is different since they accept that Sweden is a traditional Christian country and thus not all religions can be completely equal. My participants can practice their religion freely in Sweden and only Mohamed expresses that he faces limitations. The results and analysis show that the most prevalent aspect of discrimination are experienced by Muslim women wearing the hijab. It is interesting that most of the women in my interviews are stressing that they have not had negative experiences or faced discriminatory behaviour in Sweden. In comparison, the men were more outspoken and offered more criticism even though they personally are not affected. This could point towards different perceptions of the society depending on the gender.

Muslim Representation

I connect the concept of representing Islam in the Swedish society to my question since this is an aspect of living and experiencing your religion. In Amal's, Mohamed's, Mariam's, Malak's and Omar's interviews the topic of terrorism

occurs. For Amal terrorism has a strong influence on her experiences of being identified as a Muslim. When there has been a terror attack she stands out as a Muslim due to her hijab. It is striking that this experience has a stronger impact on her than wearing the hijab in general even though so much discriminatory behaviour towards Muslim women wearing the hijab has been mentioned. Also, without her hijab she would perhaps not be identified as a Muslim and therefore would not have to defend herself. Amal's narrative is embedded in a wider heterogenic discourse on Muslims in Europe where the connection to terrorism is almost automatic. She explains that how she should not have to feel like that and should not be connected to this.

“I would say that is the most heavy part sometimes more than the hijab it's more that I represent it but I want to make it clear that I'm not part of that but at the same time I'm it is not okay I shouldn't feel that.” (sic)
Amal

There is a difference between women and men representing Islam which became apparent during the interviews. According to my participants women are more connected to being a Muslim due to their hijab whereas men are easier connected to terrorism. This Omar addresses as well when he tells me how young men who grow beards have been labelled as terrorists. For Omar and Ali the climate in Sweden has become harder in the last years and it felt better before. Both do not specify a time frame but referred to a general more negative experience. For them, this does not only apply to Sweden but to all of Europe where Muslims have been increasingly accused and exposed.

After connecting what I learned through my concepts I now want to answer the question regarding how Muslims live and experience their religion in the secular Swedish society. My participants express no concerns with the secularity of the society itself and describe it positively. However, they mention that representing Islam and being identified as a Muslim can be difficult. In order to analyse the experiences of my participants the concept of religious freedom is essential and in general, none of my participants feel that there is no religious freedom in Sweden.

Nevertheless, Ali, Mohamed and Mariam question the equality between different religions but they still agree that they are free to practice their religion in Sweden. Nevertheless, Ali and Omar criticise the lack of equality concerning symbols of Islam in public places such as mosques and minarets. Amal and Mariam would not demand a different treatment of their religion because they accept and understand that Sweden is traditionally Christian and that this has an influence on the country. Mohamed criticises the school system and the lack of halal food whereas Ali does not share this opinion. This shows that my participants differ in their demands of society. Nevertheless, it is clear that Muslims in Sweden still face discrimination based on their religion. This is seen from the various stories of Muslim women wearing the hijab who face negative comments or misbehaviour.

Discrimination on a structural level based on religion seems not to be the main issue. In fact the second-generation Muslims in this study all studied and entered the labour market without any problems. In the context of terrorism, being identified as a Muslim is a negative experience for my participants since they feel the need to clarify that they do not belong to extremists. Encounters of discrimination based on religion have mainly been experienced by my female participants. The male participants could give examples from their surrounding but not themselves. This shows that Muslim women are more vulnerable to discrimination based on religion because of wearing the hijab. The second-generation immigrants believe they experience less obstacles due to their religion and are less critical compared to Muslims who came to Sweden as an adult. Therefore, it can be discussed if the differences are grounded on generational or gender differences.

5.2 Quantitative Data

In the following my quantitative results will be distinguished between descriptive, bivariate and logistics results and at the same time analysed. Therefore, connections to my theory will be made and my hypotheses and overall question will be answered and discussed.

5.2.1 Descriptive results and analysis

In my descriptive analysis I want to emphasise some central aspects to my research. It is beneficial to have an overview of my data through a description of the results in order to observe potential interesting distributions. The overall distribution of my variables can be viewed in table 3. The sample is fairly evenly distributed between male (55.28%) and female (44.72%) participants and 69.65% of the participants state that they are Christians. This includes different strands of Christianity and the majority belongs to the Swedish Church. Thus, 30.35% either answer they are atheist, agnostic or nothing. Even though the majority belongs to Christianity 73.78% of the participants state that religion is not very important for them. Both results are in accordance with the background chapter of secularisation in Sweden as well as the previous research. It shows that even though Swedes belong to the Swedish Church (or other Christian denominations), religion itself is not important for them.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of central variables

Variable	Relative Frequency or Mean
Feelings towards Muslims	Favourable = 62.54 Unfavourable = 37.46
Muslims integrate	Adopt customs = 46.99 Both = 2.50 Want to be distinct = 50.51
Importance of traditions	Unimportant = 33.60 Important = 66.40
Importance of religion	Unimportant = 73.78 Important = 26.22
In favour of Sweden Democrats	Favourable = 23.50 Unfavourable = 76.50
If immigration makes Sweden a better country	No difference = 36.78 Better = 39.84 Worse = 23.38
Education in years	13.79
Economic situation in Sweden	Good = 77.30 Bad = 22.70
Religion	Christian = 69.65 No religion = 30.35
Sex	Male = 55.28 Female = 44.72
Age	55.39

Table 4 displays the distribution of different variables which are all related to the question what is important for being truly Swedish. These are crucial aspects to take into account when discussing how Muslims can integrate themselves into the Swedish society. It can be seen that language is very important to Swedes for being Swedish whereas being Christian is not important at all. The sharing of customs and traditions is less important than sharing a language but still very central to Swedes since 25.45% stated that it is very important and 38.83% that it is somewhat

important to them. In contrast, being born in Sweden is not at all important to Swedes. From this the conclusion can be drawn that Swedes are generally open towards a pluralist society in which people can come from other places and still be Swedish. Of course it does not give any information whether all countries of origin are viewed equally positive or negative. Again in accordance with the secularity of the Swedish society it is more important that immigrants share the customs and traditions of the society than sharing the same religion. Thus, some assimilation of the Swedish traditions and customs is seen as essential for being recognised as Swedish. This relates to the argument of Hartmann and Gerteis (2005) that assimilation is necessary in order to share aspects of the culture.

Table 4: Aspects that are important for being truly Swedish

	Being born in Sweden	Speaking the language	Being Christian	Sharing customs and traditions
Very important	8.15%	69.28%	5.42%	25.45%
Somewhat important	12.07%	25.70%	11.65%	38.83%
Not very important	36.32%	3.31%	29.72%	26.16%
Not at all important	43.46%	1.17%	53.21%	9.56%

5.2.2 Bivariate results and analysis

This section discusses my bivariate results which are visualised in the following two figures. Figure 1 is based on the cross tabulation of the ratings of Muslims and the importance of sharing traditions to be Swedish. The chi² test shows that the results are statistically significant ($p = .001$). This test does not say anything about the strength of the correlation and therefore a Spearman's correlation test was run to assess the relationship. There is a positive correlation which was statistically

significant with $p = .0000$ and had a weak strength of $r_s = .2089$. Thus, I can confirm hypothesis H1 that negative feelings towards Muslims are correlated with how important traditions are for Swedes. Of the participants who are unfavourable towards Muslims 79.77% think that traditions are important whereas only 57.17% of Swedes who are favourable towards Muslims agree.

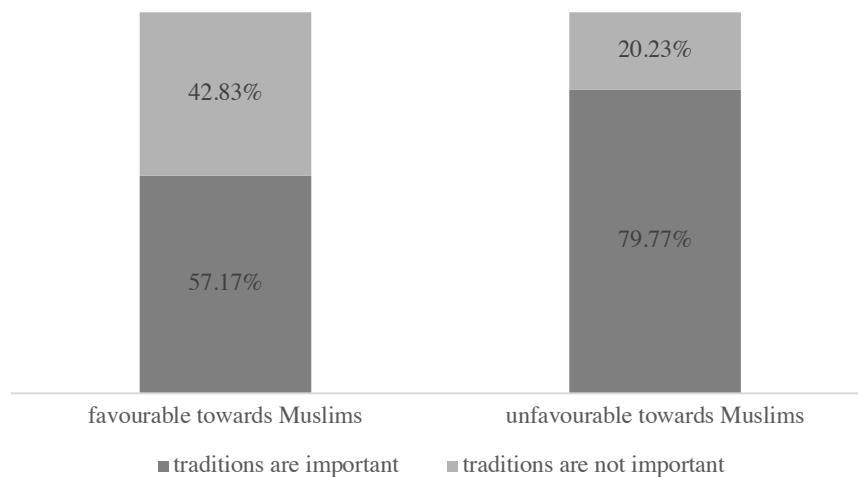


Figure 1: Cross tabulation between the feelings towards Muslims and importance of traditions

The χ^2 test of the correlation between the question if Muslims want to integrate or want to be distinct and the feeling towards Muslims is also statistically significant ($p = .0001$) and can be seen in figure 2. Again a Spearman's correlation test was run to assess the strength of the relationship. There was a positive correlation which was statistically significant and showed a moderate strength ($r_s = .4954, p = .0000$). The results show that of the Swedes who think Muslims want to be distinct 61.12% are unfavourable towards Muslims. Thus, I can confirm the hypothesis H2 that Swedes who think Muslims want to be distinct have more negative feelings towards them. Of Swedes who think that Muslims want to adopt to customs the majority is in favour of Muslims.

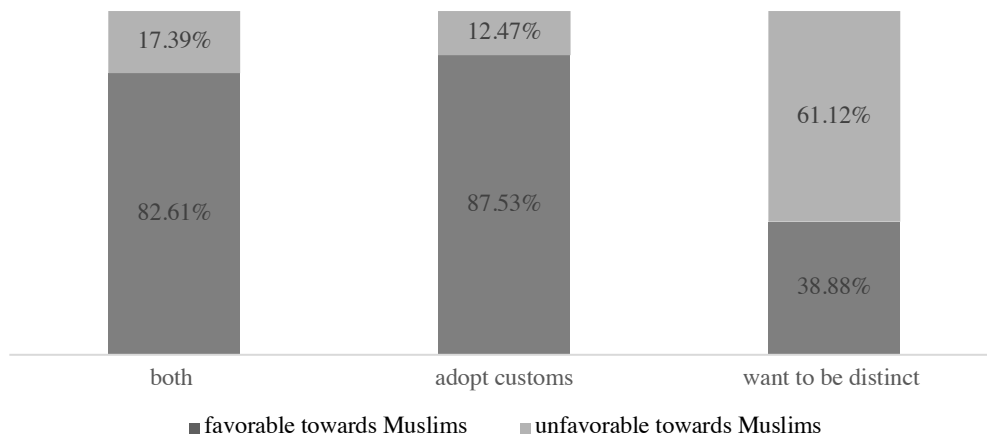


Figure 2: Cross tabulation between if Muslims want to integrate and the feelings towards Muslims

The reason for the bivariate tests is to examine what is important for Swedes for rating Muslims positively or negatively. This can be connected to the theory of multiculturalism and assimilation in Sweden, since it points more to an understanding of integration in terms of assimilation than multiculturalism in which people are visibly diverse. It also shows that parts of the Swedish society has the perception of Muslims as unwillingly to adopt to customs. In this sample the participant are divided almost equally at 50% between the two answer options. As has been explained before, Muslims are perceived strongly as a different group (Bevelaner & Otterbeck, 2010). A small part of the participants who think Muslims want both aspects still rated them positively since wanting to be distinct does not pose a threat to them.

5.2.3 Multiple logistic regression results and analysis

Table 5 shows the coefficients of my logistic regression in the form of average marginal effects and their standard errors. The interpretation of the coefficients is always *ceteris paribus*, which means that all other variables are being held constant.

Table 5: Average marginal effects for rating Muslims unfavourable

Variables	AME	SE
Importance of traditions (Ref: not important)		
Important	.020	.029
Importance of religion (Ref: not important)		
Important	-.006	.029
Opinion if immigration makes Sweden a better place (Ref: better)		
No difference	.168***	.035
Worse	.351***	.050
If Muslims want to integrate (Ref: want to adopt customs)		
Both	.014	.083
Want to be distinct	.251***	.033
Economic situation (Ref: Good)		
Bad	.008	.030
Opinion towards Sweden Democrats (Ref: unfavourable)		
Favourable	.173***	.038
Sex (Ref: Male)		
Female	-.072**	.025
Education	-.007	.004
Age	.011*	.005
Age2	-.0000667	.000

Observations: N = 881

***p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

The results show that the importance of traditions for Swedes has no statistically significant influence on their feelings towards Muslims. This is different compared to the bivariate analysis and can be accounted for by the covariates of the model. The influence of education on the rating of Muslims is not significant either. The importance of religion also has no significant effect regarding the feelings towards

Muslims which is in accordance with the secular Swedish society. The third hypothesis states that the importance of religion for Swedes has no influence on the feelings towards Muslims and can thus be confirmed. My quantitative question addresses which factors influences the feelings of Swedes towards Muslims. Thus, all three levels of analysis show that Swedes do not care much about religion which is in accordance with the previous research (see Zuckerman, 2012).

According to the results of my logistic regression I can identify factors which influence the feelings of Swedes towards Muslims. The opinion towards migration can be seen having a statistically significant effect on feelings towards Muslims. Swedes who think immigration makes Sweden a worse country have a 35.1% higher probability of rating Muslims negative compared to Swedes who believe migration makes Sweden a better place. Thus, they are not in favour of a multicultural society in general. Swedes who see no difference still have a 16.8% higher probability of rating Muslims negative. Swedes assuming that Muslims want to be distinct have a 25.1% higher probability of having negative feelings towards Muslims than Swedes who think Muslims want to adopt to customs. It can be argued that this represents what Sander (1990) says, namely that Swedes neglect that an aspect of multiculturalism is to accept diversity but distinctiveness is being connected to a negative perception of Muslims. Swedes who are in favour of the Sweden Democrats have a 17.3% higher probability of rating Muslims negatively than Swedes who are not in favour. This is in accordance to the idea that right-wing parties are against multiculturalism and therefore have a more negative perception of Muslims (Hjerm, 2009).

The included control variables were sex and age and it can be concluded that younger people and women have a higher probability of rating Muslims favourably. A woman has a 7.2% lower probability of rating Muslims negative compared to a man. Age is included as a linear and a squared variable and age has a positive effect and age squared a negative effect. This means that as people get older the effect of

age is lessened. The result here shows that with each additional year of age the probability of rating Muslims negative increases by 0.01%.

After seeing that the factors which influence negative feelings towards Muslims were generally a negative view on immigration as well as being in favour of the Sweden Democrats I want to explore how other minority groups are perceived by Swedes in this sample. Of the participants 58.53% rate Roma favourable, which is lower than for Muslims, and 96.12% rate Jews favourable. To explore if the factors which influence the feelings towards Muslims are similar to those of other minority groups I conduct the same logistic regression with the ratings of Jews and Roma as dependent variables. The results can be found in the appendix and will not be elaborated upon great detail here. The opinion towards immigration and the favourable opinion towards the Sweden Democrats does not influence the feelings towards Jews negatively at all. The results of the ratings towards Roma are very similar to that of Muslims where the opinion towards migration and the Sweden Democrats and even the opinion that Muslims want to be distinct influence the feelings towards Roma negatively. This shows that Muslims and Roma are viewed somewhat similarly, in contrast to Jews. It is interesting to see that the importance of religion has only a statistical significant effect on rating Jews negatively. This could indicate that Jews are viewed more strongly as a different religious group but not as a cultural different group.

6. Conclusion

The interest in this research has been developed through the alleged discrepancy between secular Western societies and religious Muslim immigrants. To explore this, the question *How does Muslims' religiosity in a secular society influence their subjective integration in Sweden and how does the perception of Muslims by Swedes connect to that?* has been proposed. As expected, one of the biggest differences between the qualitative and quantitative data was the importance the

participants attach to religion. Inasmuch as religion plays a central role in the lives of the Muslim participants it is not important for Swedes. Even though the secularity of the Swedish society does not constitute a problem for the Muslim participants it was found that it would still be welcomed if religion would play a bigger role in society.

To briefly summarise my findings it can be said that there are generational differences between Muslims regarding their religiosity. The second-generation participants differ in their religious belief since they question their practice and belief more than the first generation. Nevertheless, all my participants identify as religious Muslims but some are more open to the idea of adapting their practices to the norms of the Swedish society. My second-generation participants stressed the importance of Swedish traditions and celebrations and that they like to participate in those. The aspect of adopting to customs influences the feelings of Swedes towards Muslims positively and shows their importance. Furthermore, differences regarding religious culture could also be detected. The first generation would like to include religion more in the society due to its aspect of social control whereas the second generation would like to share more of themselves with the society they live in. In general the second generation tries to reinterpret their religion more in the context of the modern Swedish society.

The Muslim participants understand integration on a structural level but do not connect it to assimilation. One participant raised the thought that traditions are more of an obstacle for integration than religion. Both Muslims and Swedes mention the importance of language for being integrated or perceived as Swedish. The Swedes in this study who think that Muslims want to be distinct have a higher chance of rating them negatively and I argue that a very visible distinction between Muslims and Swedes is the clothing. As has been concluded in my qualitative analysis many Muslim women wearing the hijab face discrimination based on their religion because they are a symbol for Islam. It was interesting to see the contradictory narratives of my female participants who all except for one experienced harassment

or discrimination based on their religion. Nevertheless, they still described Sweden very positively and experience religious freedom whereas the men offered more criticism. Thus, it seems that religious freedom is being connected to the freedom to practice your religion but not to freedom from discrimination. For future research it would be important to discuss if differences regarding religiosity and integration of Muslims in Western Europe are based on gender. This would also be interesting for the perspective of Swedes since women generally rated Muslims more positively than men.

Limitations of this study concern the interview participants which did not include male second-generation Muslim immigrants and only one female first-generation Muslim immigrant, possibly because they are more difficult to approach. Nevertheless, I received information about the family of my participants which seem to relate in a similar way to religion and integration as my participants. What also should be kept in mind is that my participants' experiences are set in Malmö, the third biggest city with a significant amount of people of Muslim background. Therefore, a wider range of halal food or celebrations of holidays might be present and the experiences of Muslims in smaller villages could be different, as indicated by one of my participant's experience. Lastly, in order to combine qualitative and quantitative methods even closer it would have been helpful to collect the quantitative data myself in order to have more suitable variables and to make sure the sample represents the group of interest. Nevertheless, this study adds to previous research since it shows that religion alone does not separate the religious minority and secular majority in Sweden. The results from the qualitative as well as quantitative data point towards traditions being more of a divider. The results could validate other studies such Elander et al. (2015) and Roald (2013) regarding the efforts of the second-generation Muslim immigrants to connect their religion to the Swedish society.

In conclusion, the religiosity of the Muslims in this study does not affect their subjective integration negatively. The perception of the degree of religious freedom

differs among participants but does not seem to affect their subjective idea of integration negatively but it can however be said that freedom from discrimination based on religion is not entirely given in Sweden. Moreover, even though the second-generation immigrants are not asking for special treatment, take part in Swedish celebrations, speak Swedish and are part of the labour market, they still face discriminatory behaviour. The wearing of the hijab identifies them as Muslims and thus as a culturally and religiously different group. Even though they personally feel accepted, it cannot be said that integration is achieved since they are still being discriminated against by the majority society due to the identification as a different group. The quantitative data connects to this in a way that being a Christian is not important for being “truly” Swedish. Nevertheless, the factors which support negative feelings of Swedes towards Muslims are connected to the negative perception of immigration which was not the case for Jews. Thus Muslims represent a problematic group for Swedes in this study which can also be seen in the fact that Swedes think that Muslims want to be distinct which in turn influences their feelings negatively. However, belonging to a different religious group is not connected negatively to immigration per se.

As a final thought, future research should investigate differences between male and female Muslim immigrants and if their integration strategies as well as relation to Islam differs. This study could show that being a religious Muslims and being integrated at the same time is possible. Nevertheless, the religious freedom of Muslims in Sweden is somewhat limited depending on who you ask. The male first-generation Muslim participants of this study criticised that Christianity, as the traditional religion in Sweden, is prioritised whereas this was no concern for the female second-generation immigrants. Thus, religious freedom and its application in different societies should be further explored. What can be noted as reassuring is that the majority of Swedes in this study rated Muslim favourably and the Muslims expressed a general positive picture of the Swedish society. Thus the negative perception of Muslims by Swedes due to the actions of some should not overshadow the positive attempts of the second generation. Of course I am aware

that my participants cannot represent Muslims in Sweden but it should be noted that there is a successful path for the second generation to integration. It would be desirable if the newer generations have the chance to feel Swedish and be accepted as a part of the society independently of their appearance or belief.

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Appendix

Overview of codes identified in the interviews

First round of coding	Second round of coding & connection to the questions
Negative Experiences	<p>1. Generational differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religiosity (Code: Experiences with other Muslims was added to this) • Values connected to Islam and Sweden (Two codes were combined) • Religious culture (Code role of religion in society was added as a sub code) <p>2. Subjective integration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective integration • Religion and integration (this code has been identified as a new code from the code subjective integration) • Acceptance <p>3. How Muslims live their religion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secular society • Religious Freedom (Codes included: Negative experiences) • Muslim Representation (Codes included: Change) <p>Codes which were not used as a whole but parts have been included in the new structure of the codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identity - Malmö
Religious Freedom	
Values connected to Islam	
Religiosity	
Subjective Integration	
Secular society	
Change	
Malmö	
Experiences with other Muslims	
Identity	
Values connected to Sweden	
Muslim Representation	
Role of religion in society	
Acceptance	

Logistic regression with the dependent variable being: Ratings of Muslims, Jews and Roma

Variables	AME Muslims (Coefficients)	AME Jews	AME Roma
Importance of traditions (Ref: not important)			
Important	.020 (.148)	.011	.062
Importance of Religion (Ref: not important)			
Important	-.006 (-.046)	.044*	-.058
Opinion if immigration makes Sweden a better place (Ref: better)			
No difference	.168*** (1.11)	.001	.193***
worse	.351*** (2.15)	.021	.333***
If Muslims want to integrate (Ref: want to adopt customs)			
Both	.014 (.110)	.104	.112
Want to be distinct	.251*** (1.61)	.009	.137***
Economic situation (Ref: Good)			
Bad	.008 (.061)	.029	.098*
Opinion towards Swedish Democrats (Ref: unfavourable)			
Favourable	.173*** (1.14)	.027	.110*
Sex (Ref: Male)			
Female	-.072** (-.538)	-.020	-.061*
Education	-.007 (-.050)	-.006*	.001
Age	.011* (.082)	-.003	.011*
Age2	-.0000667 (-.001)	.000	-.000*

Observations: N = 881 (Muslims) N = 875 (Jews) N = 873 (Roma)

***p <0.001, **p <0.01, *p <0.05

Experiences of Muslims in Sweden

Consent to take part in research

Contact information:

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This interview is conducted for the master thesis of Lisa Kirschbaum in the program *Global Studies* at Lund University. The research is about Muslims in Malmö and their experiences in the Swedish society. The aim is to talk to participants about their life in Sweden and how religion plays a part within that.

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the master thesis of the researcher.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained until middle of June.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Signature of researcher Date

Date:

Name/Number:

Interview Guide

General information

- When were you born?
- Where were you born?
 - o If not born in Sweden: Since when do you live in Sweden?
- Which language do you speak mainly at home?

- How do you feel living in the Swedish society is like?
 - o Do you feel integrated?
 - o What does integration mean for you, personally?
- Do you feel accepted by the Swedish society?
 - o If not why?
- How do you feel about Swedish traditions and customs?
- Have you ever had any negative experiences because of your religion or any other reason?
 - o Can you tell me about a specific example?
- Do you think being religious helps or hinders integration in Sweden?
 - o Have you ever encountered a specific situation in which religion helped or was an obstacle?

- Which values do you connect with Islam?
 - o Why?

- Which values do you connect with Sweden?
 - o Why?

- Is religion something private or public for you?
- How would you describe being religious in Sweden is like?
- How do you feel about religious freedom in Sweden?
 - o Are there any limits regarding your religious practice in Sweden?
- How is it to get along with non-religious people?
 - o Did you have any specific encounters?

- What do you think of how your parents/children live in Sweden compared to you?

Questions at the end

- Is there anything else you would like to add?

- Do you know anyone else who I could interview?
 - o For example, family members or friends?

Transcript excerpts

I = Interviewer

P = Participant

Interview Amal

I - ja I think it is very hard to understand for both sides. which values do you connect with Sweden?

P - I would say that Sweden is a very Muslims country even though we don't have a lot of Muslims. really I would say a lot of values that I just talked about very beautiful values in Sweden

I - for example?

P - I mean for example like I know it's changing a bit and I really don't I really don't care about politics and I'm not saying that paying taxes is the only best way, no you can help people in many other ways but I really do like

I - the welfare system?

P - ja the welfare system but also the the feeling because you can talk about people being equal but you don't necessarily need to feel it but you really feel it in Sweden I had one friend that she was born here but she moved to Dubai when she was very young and she lived there for her whole life 30 years and then she came back here and she really said I have never felt so welcomed somewhere as here even though I have lived in Dubai in almost 30 years I have never felt so welcomed as I do here so I really like the values of people being equal it doesn't matter you can be you can say whatever you want you're still equal to the law I mean you're equal with your rights it doesn't you will never it's very difficult to have it of course you maybe you people doesn't always feel the equalises but they are equal so I that is the most part I like about Sweden. also the welfare system I like it it's the same value that I like in Islam that helping other people that is very nice. the acceptance still in Sweden we do accept a lot of differences we don't we don't judge people in the same way as we do in other as other countries do I still think that of course there are some judging but we are also very very acceptant, very open.

Interview Hassen

I - så det är lite samma, men hur känner du dig om religiös frihet i Sverige?

P - Ja det är en väldigt, väldigt bra princip, det är guld värt. Religionsfriheten är något som man måste hålla i.

I - Och du tänker det är bra i Sverige? De lever det och finns det gränser?

P - du menar här i Sverige?

I - Här i Sverige, ja.

P - Ja religionsfrihet, det är någonting som man måste hålla fast i och här i Sverige så, man ser det i verkligheten i motsats kanske till några andra länder, även inom EU eller om jag kan nämna typ Frankrike som exempel så är Frankrike lite långt ifrån den svenska modellen, när det gäller den här respekten för

religionsfriheten, trots att de är västvärlden allihopa och kanske Frankrike har alltid varit en inspirationskälla för andra Europeiska länder när det gäller de här principer, religionsfrihet och demokrati, men det är det inte. I Frankrike så är det tyvärr...

Interview Mariam

I - And do you feel integrated or what is integration for you personally?

P - It depends how you identify (pause) define the word integration. Well I feel like I'm a normal resident in the country. I practice my rights I have my duties. So it's I don't speak the Swedish language so that might be a bit of a bad ear [inaudible] to be fully integrated in the society but I am aware of the cultural differences I'm aware of different social norms and religious beliefs and other things so I feel like I'm in a way integrated in the society because I also feel like they also understand the others. And they are aware of what kind of differences that does exist between human beings. Especially for foreigners who live in Sweden.

I - What do you mean by that?

P - They have a lot of immigrants they have a lot of refugees they have a lot of other like minority groups coming from different parts of the world to work or either to like seek asylum because of different reasons so they are acquainted having the different residents living in the Swedish society apart from the Swedes.

Interview Omar

I - Vi har pratat lite om det, men tror du att finns religiös frihet i Sverige?

P - Rent teoretiskt, ja.

I - Och praktiskt?

P - Det är det jag sa, praktiskt, du ser rätt så mycket hinder och då får du inte representation på samma sätt som andra samfund. Det gör man inte det. Rent teoretiskt, det ser man religionsfrihet och yttrandefrihet, absolut det stämmer. Men om du skulle bygga en moské, var finns den här yttrandefrihet, religionsfrihet? Man har garanti i grundlag. Är det bara på individs nivå, okej. Men om några stycken vill bilda en förening och de har samma intresse, får de lov att göra detta eller får de inte lov att göra detta? Förstår du vad jag menar? Rent teoretiskt skulle jag säga ja. Nu man pratar om böneutropet i Växjö här om dagen, jag har i denna diskussionen om man vill rösta fram om det är tillåtet eller inte tillåtet. I mina ögon, det gör någon sense för mig direkt så här, för vad kommer det att bidra till om man har böneutropet utåt? Det kommer inte att bidra till någonting, jag tycker själv. Men det ska vara också jämlikt, jämställt. Kyrkor ringer klockan och då görs man inte bara en gång utan gör det flera gånger under veckan. Om man har ett böneutrop precis som man har i detta nu och inom trakten här, inte långt håll, inte över hela staden eller något annat. Vad skadar detta egentligen? Låt någon sjunga. Jag får lov att vara ute i staden och göra böneutropet. Mitt i staden. Vilken tid som helst, närsomhelst. Det kan jag ha. Det finns garanterat i lagen. Jag kan sitta där och recitera koran eller bibeln det är ingen som...