Mobile Learning and Self-Worth
The Case of Syrian Refugees from a Kantian Perspective

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Department of Education
Master Thesis 30 HE credits
International and Comparative Education
Master Programme in International and Comparative Education
(120 credits)
Spring term 20XX
Supervisor: title first name last name
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Abstract

As the war in Syria is about to enter its seventh year, Syrians continue to head towards Europe to seek safety and protection. This challenges European countries to provide urgent relief and services including education for a high number of Syrian refugees every year. However, the journey of Syrian refugees does not end with their arrival to safety. The refugee experience presents many difficulties including issues of wellbeing and self-worth. This qualitative comparative study examines the different platforms and solutions Mobile Learning could offer to refugees. In addition to that, it also discusses the possibility of leveraging Mobile Learning as a mean for Syrian refugees in Europe to achieve a sense of self-worth from the Kantian perspective of agency. The study starts with a comprehensive overview of the meaning of the term ‘refugee’ and the refugee experience, then it moves on to identify Mobile Learning and its impact and relationship to the recent refugee crisis. Then, the study introduces the Kantian philosopher Christine Korsgaard and her idea of agency, action, identity and value. The literature review after that discusses Korsgaard’s philosophy and links it to refugees and Mobile Learning. After viewing the research methods and methodology, the study comparatively analyses and discusses findings drawn from semi-structured interviews of 10 participants pertaining to the use of Mobile Learning platforms for higher education and language learning. The implications of these findings are that Syrian refugees in Europe have access to Mobile Learning platforms that vary in use and quality. However, when these platforms are used successfully, they do have the potential to support refugees’ sense of self-worth. The study then ends with a conclusion and suggestions for future research.

Keywords
Immanuel Kant, Christine Korsgaard, agency, refugee, Mobile Learning, autonomous, efficacious, practical identity, self-worth.
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Acronyms

EU- European Union
GIZ- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HED- Higher Education
ICE- International and Comparative Education
ICT- Information Communication Technology
IDP- Internally Displaced Persons
INEE- Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IRC- International Rescue Committee
ISIS- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
IT- Information Technology
MIT- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
ML- Mobile Learning
MOOC- Massive Open Online Course
NGO- Non-governmental Organisation
OER- Open Education Resources
UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund
USA- United States of America
Chapter One

1. Introduction

Nothing has taken the world by storm lately like the recent political changes and the increasing levels of forced migration around the world. With a current number of 65.6 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, we are witnessing an unprecedented global crisis. Most of these movements of forced displacement are taking place within or from the Middle East and Africa. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) more than half of the world’s refugees come from 3 countries where the most drastic conflicts are currently taking place: Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia.

The dramatic peak of the recent refugee crisis has been viewed on live television in the summer of 2015. This was the point when Europe received, for the first time, the highest influx of refugees since WWII. This led to a political frenzy over the newcomers to the Old Continent. It sparked national political controversy and has been labeled as a ‘crisis’ and an ‘exodus’ by the media. Europe received around 396,700 asylum applications from January to August 2017 only, and the numbers are not expected to drop through 2018. The highest percentage of these applications belong to Syrian refugees who are coming to Europe not only from their home countries, but also from their first countries of asylum. The lack of durable solutions and limited legal protection in these countries pressure displaced people to risk their life again by crossing the Mediterranean to reach a place where they think they would have more rights (UNHCR, 2017e, p.91). This comes with a heavy global demand of emergency response and requires both professional and academic action to understand the multifaceted nature of the crisis on all levels.

In order for refugees to rebuild their lives in Europe, there are usually two priorities for them and their country of asylum: integration and contributing to the job market. This puts an incredible pressure on systems to create tangible plans to help refugees with these two elements. Education in this case is a strong contributor to
involve refugees in their new society and build their capacity to enter the professional scene. Also, education is very important for refugees’ social development and is an important tool for them to realise their self-worth and future aspirations. However, creating dynamic and long-term education strategies for refugee learners, teachers and systems is a very challenging task. It has financial, cultural and political dimensions to be considered. Additionally, taking the urgency of needed response into account, learners and systems require instant and practical tools to facilitate their educational goals. Mobile Learning (ML) could be one of these tools that has the potential to provide useful modules across formal, non-formal and informal education. It can increase learning opportunities and address further educational challenges.

This study focuses on the experience of Syrian refugees in Europe. According to experts at Mercy Corps\(^1\), Syrian refugees are the most tech savvy population of refugees the world has ever known so far (Rutkin, 2016, p.1). They use technology for multiple purposes during their trip to Europe and after they arrive to stay connected and updated. When it comes to education, using mobile devices provides them with flexible and affordable learning experiences. However, examining and implementing the use of ML seems to be mostly focused on discussing issues of access, quality and outcome. On the other hand, it is also very important to acknowledge the experience of refugees on a personal level. When it comes to refugees, their psychological wellbeing and sense of self-worth play a major role in their development in their country of asylum. Surviving conflicts and dangerous circumstances in addition to the pressure of building a new life have the potential to increase their trauma. So, it is significant to acknowledge the added value of education in their lives.

Taking this into consideration, this study discusses ML as a mean to be leveraged by refugees in their educational experience to achieve a sense of self-worth. As a potential solution to issues like loss of documents and lack of language skills, ML can help refugees to jump through hoops and quickly start adjusting to the new culture, society and job market of their countries of asylum. That in which will arguably, help them to regain their self-worth and rebuild their agency. In order to

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\(^1\) Mercy Corps is a global humanitarian aid agency that is concerned with natural disaster, economic collapse and conflict. [www.mercycorps.org.uk](http://www.mercycorps.org.uk)
understand the idea of self-worth, we need to discuss and identify agency, character and identity. To do so, this study adopts a philosophical perspective embedded in Kantianism. More specifically, it takes on the philosophy of Christine Korsgaard due to her valuable thesis in the constitution of human and social agency. The next few sections will introduce the study and lay the ground of the reasoning behind its aims and objectives and elaborate on its limitations and structure.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this study is to examine the ability of mobile learning to provide a sense of self-worth to Syrian refugees in Europe. Basically, its goal is to provide an interdisciplinary academic observation of the personal experience of refugee learners with education through mobile technology as a potential solution to issues pertaining to human agency and self-worth. This study makes this observation by shedding the light on two comparative essential educational goals for refugees through following these main objectives:

1. Identifying the context of the Syrian refugee crisis, mobile learning and the philosophy or Christine Korsgaard as the main key concepts of the study.

2. Understanding the relationship between education and refugees’ self-worth by adopting a Kantian approach to human agency.

3. Conducting a qualitative study on the impact of using mobile learning for language and higher education on Syrian refugees’ self-worth within a European context.

4. Analysing study findings after exploring research methodologies, then discussing those findings to provide final conclusions.

1.2 Research Questions

The aims and objectives of the study are addressed by two research questions. These questions are permanent throughout the study as guidelines for the data
collection methods and research analysis. They are also to be considered at the final stage of the study when discussing the analysed findings and drawing the final conclusions of the study. These questions are:

1. What are the Mobile Learning platforms that Syrian refugees in Europe are currently using and what are the solutions they provide?

2. Could Mobile Learning be a mean for Syrian refugees in Europe to achieve a sense of self-worth in a Kantian sense and how?

1.3 Significance to International and Comparative Education

This study lays its foundation on an intersection of three important topics in International and Comparative Education (ICE). Mobile Learning, refugee education and the philosophical approach of the thesis are all related to areas of interest within ICE research.

Studies of refugees and Mobile Learning are both concerned with space, which increasingly became to be an important topic in ICE. One of the dimensions of the idea of space is mobility, which is a ‘social production of movement’. It is a topic that was the centre of many researches during the last two decades (Sobe & Fischer, 2009, p.361). The forced movement of refugees and their usage of ICTs is a subject that fits in perfectly within the topic of space and mobility. On the other hand, the experience of seeking asylum can be viewed as ‘transnational movement for social justice’, which calls on an international intervention for the rights of displaced people including the right to quality education (Arnove, 2009, p.113). This is a current topic of interest in ICE, especially that it stems from globalisation theory, which according to Arnove (2009) is strongly applicable in the field. Moreover, refugee education usually takes place in multi and inter-cultural contexts, which is another area of interest in ICE that this thesis internally relates to. This study also elaborates on ICE’s concern with multicultural learning environments. It views the social and cultural concerns of
refugees’ agency and education opportunities from the point of view of participants and their understanding of their social and cultural context.

Mobile Learning is understandably a relatively new topic in the field of education as it sparked academic interest less than two decades ago. However, the study of technology in education and especially the use of ICTs has been an area of interest for quite longer. Brown (2009) argues that ICT in education has been obliquely referred to in contemporary studies as technology became a facilitator of globalisation through connecting societies around the world (p.1159). However, using digital technology in education is still a debatable topic, and using comparative research may set the tone to how we can better leverage ICTs for quality education. Additionally, conducting research on areas of study like ML keeps the field of ICE up to date as it provides numerous opportunities to understand global, social and cultural dynamics in which technology became embedded in (Brown, 2009, p.1160).

As for the philosophical approach of the study, it is also not estranged to ICE, and holds the same interchangeable relationship to the field as ML does. According to McLaughlin (2009) “a philosophical approach to education needs a comparative dimension and… a comparative approach to education needs a philosophical dimension” (p.1128). He adds that philosophy is already implied in one way or another in majority of international and comparative research. The Kantian perspective of this study offers a particular demonstration of the idea of self-worth linked to refugees’ agency and practical identity. It debates the possibility of ML as an educational mean for refugees to reach personal ends of a significant philosophical depth. This highlights the originality of this study and its distinct focus on dealing with a global issue from a specific lens while examining the personal experience of learners.

1.4 Limitations and Delimitations

The main limitation of this study is the interview participants sample. Many efforts were made to find participants who used or are using ML for taking higher education (HED) courses or learning a language. However, although the size of the
final sample is sufficient for this study, its quality is not very satisfactory for the researcher. It was noticed during the sampling process that the learners who agreed to participate in the study are already highly educated. All the interviews but one, were conducted almost entirely in English. Many of the participants were people who already finished a master’s degree and one of them was a paediatrician and a PhD candidate. So it is fair to say that the study is based on a sample of Syrian refugee learners who are intellectually more privileged than most refugees. As for refugees who are slightly less educated, they refused to participate in the study. This could go back to their lack of trust in talking to researchers. However, once the study progresses, it becomes evident that the reason for that is basically because ML is already more used by refugees who are highly educated than those who are less educated.

Another limitation is the geographical level of the study. Although the selection of Europe is justified in the methodology chapter of the study, it is admittedly a large scope. The sample is collected from 3 different countries where most Syrian refugees in Europe reside as an attempt to make it as inclusive as possible. However, these refugees come from the same country, belong to the same culture and have experienced the same general circumstances. Their experience of issues related to self-worth is somehow very similar, which could make the large scope of the study suitable for its humanistic philosophical approach.

The delimitation of this study is its originality. What made the preparation for the study slightly difficult is that no earlier or similar studies regarding its topic was found. ML is a relatively novel topic, and the Syrian refugee crisis is considered very recent in history. Also, the whole idea of refugees using mobile technology for education is also new. Therefore, It is unlikely that a study has been already done to discuss the usage of ML by Syrian refugees for the sake of achieving self-worth from a Kantian perspective. Therefore, this study has the potential to be an original study. For the researcher, it stands as a good pilot study for a PhD research of the humanistic dimension of ML.
1.5 Structure

This study is arranged into six chapters. Chapter one which has already been introduced starts with an introduction to the study and continues to view the study’s aims and objectives, which leads to also presenting the study’s research questions. Then it discusses why this study is significant to the field of International and Comparative Education. Then, it explains the study’s limitations and delimitations leading up to this chapter viewing the structure of the study. Chapter two discusses the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study. It first identifies key concepts like refugees, Mobile Learning and the philosophy of Christine Korsgaard. Then, it discusses the literature review used to set the theoretical basis of the study. Chapter three then discusses in details the methodology of the study. It starts with the study design, method, analysis, ontology and epistemology. Then it views the sampling criteria, quality criteria and ethical considerations. This is followed by chapter four, which sheds the light on the data collection method and presents the settings and participants. Chapter five presents the analysis and findings from the collected data while accounting for the comparative units of analysis. It is concluded with a comparative summary of these findings. Finally, chapter six views the discussion of the analysed findings based on the research questions while reflecting on the earlier theoretical framework of the study as well. The study then ends with an overall summary and conclusions drawn by discussion and suggestions for future research.
Chapter Two

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks

This chapter presents the theoretical basis of the study. It starts with viewing the key concepts, which are refugees, Mobile Learning and then the philosophy of Kant and Korsgaard. Then it moves to the literature review discussing in details the philosophical ideas that shapes self-worth from a Kantian sense. Finally it ties all the key concepts to the philosophy of Korsgaard and discusses its relationship with education and leveraging Mobile Learning for refugees.

2.1 Key Concepts

2.1.1 Emergencies, Crises and refugees

2.1.1.1 Refugees

The United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) identifies a refugee as a “person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such a fear, is unwilling to, avail themselves of the protection of that country” (UNHCR, n.d.). This definition was coined during the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. It is highly important to differentiate between refugees, economic migrants and illegal migrants. Refugees are forced to flee their country because of persecution or a life threat. While migrants usually volunteer to leave their country to pursue a better life and they are not usually unable to obtain the legal protection of the country of their nationality like the case with refugees (UNHCR, n.d.). It is also wise to differentiate between refugees and asylum seekers. While the practical and social circumstances in many cases of refugees and asylum seekers may match, the fundamental distinction between the two is legal status.
Asylum seekers are people who fled their country and applied for a refugee status in another country but have not yet been granted an official refugee status (UNHCR, n.d; Refugee Council UK, n.d.). So most of the time, all refugees go through being asylum seekers before their request gets officially admitted, except in cases of refugees admitted on a *prima facie* basis\(^2\).

At the time in which this study is taking place, there are 65.6 million forcibly displaced people in the world. According to UNHCR, 30% of them are displaced in Africa, 26% in the Middle East and North Africa, while the number is less in Europe as it reaches up to 17% (UNHCR, 2017a). The dispute in the Middle East stands as a major complicated political issue nowadays, and it results in a huge influx of refugees every year. The conflict in Syria has produced over 13.5 million people in need, which means more than half of the total population of Syria is now displaced. According to the latest UNHCR statistics in May 2017, 6.3 million of them are internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 4.5 million are refugees outside of Syria. Most of these refugees are currently in neighbouring countries like Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. Turkey alone hosts around 3.2 million registered refugees (UNHCR, 2017b). Lebanon and Jordan being two small countries have received an overwhelming number of refugees from 2011 till today, around 1 million refugees in Lebanon and over 650,000 in Jordan. On the other hand, Europe as a whole received a little less than a million refugee applications, specifically around 987,571 between April 2011 and September 2017. The highest percentages of refugee applications in Europe are in Germany with 514,995 applications and Sweden with 114,281 applications between April 2011 and September 2017 (UNHCR, 2017c). Over the last few years, the media was and still is swarming with news reports of the war in Syria and the ‘refugee crisis’ that it has produced. A quick look at the earlier mentioned statistics would clarify that there is indeed a refugee crisis, but it is mostly in the same region where the war is taking place. However, the refugee influx to Europe, especially since 2015, seems to have a huge impact on the continent politically, socially and economically as well.

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\(^2\) A *prima facie* basis is a strategy used in cases of large-scale influxes of asylum seekers from a certain country to another. In this case, the recognition of a refugee status is done based on admitting groups of asylum seekers at a time (UNHCR, 2002). A *prima facie* case was applied during the huge influx of Iraqi refugees to Syria upon the breaking of the sectarian conflict in Iraq in 2006. It is usually done to secure urgent protection as fast as possible in cases of exodus-like situations.
2.1.1.2 The Refugee Experience

Most refugees arrive to Europe by being illegally smuggled in through either sea or land routes. Most of them head across the Mediterranean from North Africa to the southern shores of Europe. Refugees who take sea routes usually arrive cramped up on boats that often carry beyond their capacity with high chances of sinking. However, Their journey does not end there. Most refugees carry on after that taking extremely dangerous and jolty land routes to reach Western and Northern Europe (UNHCR, 2015a). After arriving to their destination, refugees are usually placed in refugee camps for the initial period of their asylum. They go through interviews and assessments while receiving legal and health services for a certain period of time. The waiting periods for the refugee status determination procedures and the process of being transformed outside of camps into urban areas vary from one country to another.

The hardship of surviving war, risking one’s life in a dangerous journey to Europe, facing the harsh reality of living in a refugee camp in addition to going through a rigorous refugee status determination process and facing the challenges of integration can all leave a distressing mark on a refugee’s wellbeing and sense of self-worth. Stein (1981) argues that after suffering loss on many fronts and enduring hardship and trauma, being in a refugee camp could awaken feelings like anxiety, fear and frustration among refugees. The reality of what happened and what is yet to be done in order to settle down and start a new life suddenly hits hard. It is important to discuss the impact that the asylum seeking process leaves on refugees’ agency and psychological wellbeing. More research is being done nowadays to assess these situations, especially after resettlement, as they embody a continuation of previous traumas. Refugees are personally part of the international response to humanitarian crises as they represent an element of resilience in encountering their new circumstances towards resettlement, which depends on their comprehension of themselves, their new community and their wellbeing (Hess, Isakson, Nelson & Goodkind, 2017,p.2).
Nowadays, there is an added factor to all of this, which nests a huge portion of its entity in media. The political and social effect of the recent refugee influx to Europe is one of the highlights of this decade. Contemporary Dutch historian Leo Lucassen sheds the light on this point from a historical perspective. He argues that what makes this influx of refugees different from the one Europe witnessed in the 1990s is the unprecedented diversity in cultural backgrounds of the new asylum seekers, which caused the rowdiness of mainstream politicians holding anti-immigration agendas. The novel influence of media fostered their ‘apocalyptical’ warnings against refugees, especially those of a Muslim background, who are an absolute majority among asylum seekers. This rhetoric has been fuelled by the rise of ISIS and the series of terrorist attacks across Europe. It generated an atmosphere of islamophobia and xenophobia that took some European political fronts by storm (Lucassen, 2017). This lead to the hesitation of many European countries to allocate financial efforts to help and resettle refugees, in addition to viewing them as a threat to national security (World Education News, 2015). This is not to deny the fact that the majority of political parties in many countries, especially Germany and Sweden, mostly welcomed refugees, but to point out an issue that sensitively effects refugees on a personal level. The feeling of not being fully accepted could lead to harmful consequences for both, refugees and their hosting communities. According to UNHCR (2015b) xenophobia negatively affects the asylum experience and local integration, which could jeopardise the quality of integration as a form of protection or durable solution for refugees. So, it is fair to assume that the pressure of the political atmosphere nowadays in addition to elements of cultural shock and the hardship of surviving life-threatening events could affect refugees’ wellbeing and agency. However, there are always ways to overcome such issues. This study aspires to discuss education as one of the potential solutions that could assist refugees in restructuring their lives so they can regain self-worth.

In a study done on the experience of resettled Iraqi refugees in the USA, Hess et al. (2017) point out the universal characteristic of agency in being an essential part of being human, but at the same time how much it is related to our own cultural and social structure. This idea will be discussed further from a philosophical perspective when this study delves into Kantianism and Christine Korsgaard’s stance on agency...
and character. Hess et al. (2017) start their study by theorising that refugees barely have agency, but near the end of their study, they find no evidence of that. They consequently hint to the conclusion that refugees’ agency does exist but it is affected or hindered in many occasions and that the social transaction of refugees’ lives after resettlement both constrains and channels agency. In the Kantian perspective, the potentiality of agency always exists. However, for the reasons discussed earlier in this section, agency can be affected by the refugee experience in terms of its impact on identity, efficacy and autonomy, thus on self-worth. On the other hand, many ways could help refugees to develop their character and constitute their agency and this study will discuss education as one of those ways.

2.1.1.3 Education in Emergencies and Crises

The average time that refugees spend in exile is around 20 years. This is basically a lifetime of potential productivity for adults and children. So, it is crucial that we look at the needs that go beyond the everyday essentials of living (UNHCR, 2016a,p.3). According to UNHCR statistics in 2015, only 50% of refugees have access to primary education, while 22% receive secondary education and shockingly, only 1% of them go on to receive a university degree. These numbers are highly worrying taking into consideration how important education is for people and how empowering it could potentially be for vulnerable groups like refugees. UNESCO views education as “an important tool to ensure peaceful societies” and adds that quality education is an important instrument in the fight against intolerance and the prevention of discrimination (UNESCO, 2017a, p.7). This seems to refer to people on both sides of the asylum scenario, refugees and people from hosting countries. Education can provide background knowledge of the new encountered cultures for both sides. Integrated schools in general proved to have a positive effect on the identity of minority groups and on promoting attitudes of tolerance and acceptance for inclusion (UNESCO, 2016, p.106). In general, education is very important for displaced learners. It helps them to adopt a more productive life and equip them to enter the job market in their host country, which is what most of them aspire to. Including refugees in national education systems will help them to understand their new community and equip them with skills and knowledge to potentially rebuild their
communities when they go back home (UNESCO, 2016, p.106-108). Additionally, practices of peace education have the potential to reduce aggressiveness among students who have the tendency to it, which prevents violence in the long run (UNESCO, 2016, p.108). According to UNHCR, education is proved to reduce child marriage, child labor and work exploitation (UNHCR, 2016a, p.5). Secondary education provides a safe space for adolescents to develop themselves and build positive social networks (UNESCO2017a, p.8). Moreover, education provides problem solving and critical thinking skills; thus, upgrades job prospects and provides a sense of self-reliance and self-esteem (UNHCR, 2016a, p.5).

Education in situations of emergencies and crises could be challenging on many levels. 86% of refugees in the world are hosted in developing countries where guaranteeing access to quality education is already challenging for hosting governments in regards to their own populations. Yet, with accelerating numbers of newcomers, governments are faced with additional responsibilities to provide infrastructure for schooling in addition to teachers training and learning materials (UNHCR, 2016a, p.4). Additionally, cases of education access for refugees are not usually monitored in national systems of host countries, which makes following up on their achievements almost non-existent (UNHCR, 2016a, p.5). Refugee education is mostly funded by emergency funds, which are not designated for long-term solutions. Also, education funds take up a very humble portion compared to other types of assistances. According to a UNESCO estimation, other than the fact of being underfunded itself, the humanitarian aid system designates only 2% of its funds to the education sector (UNESCO, 2016). As for European countries, many of them have adopted an educational plan for refugees within their integration policy. Even before the recent refugee crisis, Sweden had an ambitious plan to improve free Swedish language courses and manage educational improvements and achievements of refugees and immigrants. Sweden also provides vocational training courses for adult and free access to higher education (Regeringskansliet, 2009). Germany also has a policy to integrate refugee children into schools and offer free language courses. Additionally, Germany has a very effective network of scholarship programmes running within different states to provide additional opportunities for education. Plus, there are constant efforts to simplify the process of recertification.
and validation of academic credentials (Unangst, 2017). However, education maintains to be a very difficult task for refugees to achieve even with such policies. Europe has struggled with identifying integration and coming up with a culture-sensitive plan that mostly involves education in its formal and non-formal dimensions. Moreover, issues of lost documents, credential recognition and the barrier of language are still problematic for most refugees even with governmental efforts. Add to that elements of cultural shock, psychological wellbeing and struggling to understand the new laws and work culture in the new country. All of this may affect refugees' abilities or readiness to continue their education. However, the effort still continues to work on all fronts to come up with innovative solutions for such issues. One of them is encouraging a lifelong learning experience for refugees and facilitating ways for them to support their educational endeavours. One of these solutions is the use of technology and investing in Mobile Learning (ML). According to UNESCO, information and communications technology (ICT) has the potential to enhance access and also quality of education for refugees as a step to avoid giving rise to a lost generation (UNESCO, 2016, p.20).

2.1.2 Mobile Learning

Mobile technology is considered a branch of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). While ICT does not exactly have a specific universal definition, it is in general accepted to mean ‘all devices, networking components, applications and systems’ that could give spaces for people to interact in the digital world (WhatIs.com, n.d.). Mobile technology is within that mix of ICT tools. UNESCO identifies Mobile Learning (ML) as “the use of mobile technology, either alone or in combination with other information and communication technology (ICT), to enable learning anytime and anywhere” (UNESCO, 2013, p.6). However, identifying what a mobile device is would be harder than it seems because of the ongoing and rapid change and development of technology and especially mobile technology. So, UNESCO choses a broad identification of what a mobile device is by including into the definition devices that are “digital, easily portable, usually owned and controlled by an individual rather than an institution, can access the internet, have multimedia
capabilities, and can facilitate a large number of tasks, particularly those related to communication" (UNESCO, 2013, p.6). The role that mobile technologies play in our lives nowadays is unprecedented. Technology is almost making its way into every single aspect of our routine and changing many aspects of our lives. With many debates over its effect, whether positive or negative, it is undeniable that mobile devices can offer practical solutions in various fields. The next two sections will discuss the importance of ML and the way it is leveraged to assist refugees.

2.1.2.1 The Impact of Mobile Learning

The way we do education does not seem to have changed a lot compared to other sectors. We still have the same method of a classroom in an institution with groups of students and teachers interacting together. We still use textbooks for a subject-based method of learning that depends mostly on lecturing, homework and examination. It is true that there have been plenty of innovative efforts to make a change in education systems like encouraging practical and critical thinking through debates and community service projects or outdoor learning. Still, the main general structure of how we do education maintains to be mostly the same as we had it decades ago. However, nowadays it seems that technology might be the potential change-maker of the way we teach and learn.

Taking into consideration the vast spread of technology nowadays, it is almost inescapable for us to eventually leverage it for education. When it comes to mobile devices, according to a UNESCO report published in 2014, the United Nations estimates the number of people on earth who have access to mobile phones to be 6 billion. Mobile devices are actually the most widespread kind of ICTs in history (UNESCO, 2014). Additionally, the current number of Internet users is 3.6 billion, and it is estimated to reach 4.7 billion users worldwide in 2020 (UNESCO, 2017b, p.58). Mobile Learning has the potential to expand access to educational opportunities and high quality schooling that learners may not relish on the ground. It can improve already existing pedagogies and support inquiry-based learning (UNESCO, 2013, P. 10). Additionally, ML facilitates learning at anytime and anywhere, because it depends on portable, lightweight and sometimes small devices that could be easily
carried around. These devices can be used for communication and collaboration; they connect formal and informal education and provide learning opportunities for workers outside of workspaces. Also, with a wireless connectivity, these devices can accommodate monitored and coordinated learning activities between locations (Kukulska-Hulme, 2005). Language learning applications like Rosetta Stone, Babbel and Duolingo, could be used from any mobile device either by downloading an app on a mobile phone or from a browser on a laptop. Learners can practise language through a series of short lessons within modules. With an Internet connection they can finish a lesson on their way to work using their phone application, and then continue where they left off in the evening from their laptop or tablet. The applications on their different devices are synchronised, which makes these language modules accessible from any device, anywhere at anytime. Such usages also support immediate feedback and indicate progress. Learners do not have to wait for weeks to receive guidance and comments from their instructors anymore. Moreover, instant feedback of learning activities on the spot can help learners to recognise comprehension errors and view corrections of information (UNESCO, 2013, p.13). This has the potential to change systems that are strictly based on testing. This interactive feedback-based method of learning does not only identify students’ level of understanding of a certain subject, but also provides support for their weaknesses and help them recover their mistakes. This is something that tests do not offer.

ML could be one of the top influencers of Lifelong Learning in all its dimensions, formal, non-formal and informal. That stems from its ability to support personalised learning. Good designs of educational programmes available as platforms, applications or games can detect students’ level of comprehension and provide information accordingly. ML can provide multimedia support and interactive features that could motivate students and spark their interest to better engage in discussion and research (Zhang, 2015). ML has the potential to enrich students’ experience in and out of classroom. It can bridge formal and informal education by stretching out the learning experience from school to outside of school. As an example, students can listen or watch lectures or read materials through a mobile device at home and then come to class to discuss and debate what was already absorbed at home. This could prove to save time spent at the classroom and spark
more interaction within it (UNESCO, 2013, p.16). Classrooms can leverage mobile
technologies in many ways. Its purpose could vary from the simplest usage like
substituting printed textbooks with portable digital devices to designing learning
networks that allow teachers to track the progress of each student. Textbooks are
usually expensive and hard to carry around, while affordable e-readers could contain
hundreds of books and sources of information in one lightweight interactive device.
Both teachers and students can use such devices in class (UNESCO, 2014). As for
using digital devices to monitor students’ progress, it could be done through
particularly designed applications that can test students’ levels. These applications
could be accessible for teachers to provide needed guidelines for improving students’
performances (Churchill, Fox & King, 2016). In another example within educational
institutions but outside of the classroom, digital platforms like Ladok and Mondo used
by Stockholm University, perform as cyber common ground for students, instructors
and administrators to share information, instructions, assignments and feedback.
These platforms are usually accessible from mobile devices like laptops, smart
phones or portable tablets. The feedback processes could also involve parents when
dealing with younger groups, as they could ask ‘up-to-the-minute’ information about

What this study has described about ML so far seems to be very positive. However, the use of digital technologies sparks a lot of debate about policies and ethics of usage. There are plenty of misconceptions, limitations and policy recommendations to be discussed here. In an interview with professor John Traxler, who is a pioneer in ML, he discusses that when educational institutions first started to use technology, they used to provide the devices to students. Then, because of lack of funds in that area in general and in order to make the ICT usage endeavour sustainable, they now depend on mobile devices that students bring with them. So, while they had control over the content of the institutions’ devices, the students now are the ones who are in control of these devices because they own them. This alters the dynamic control in the classroom, so regulations of what students can do and have access to while learning now is not under the control of educators anymore (Stifterverband, 2016). Professor Traxler continues through the interview to argue that this control is needed because students need guidance of what resources are
reliable and trustworthy and what is not. That comes in addition to content control, especially for little children whom the schools are legally responsible for when under their care. This feeling of losing control over the students’ usage of resources in class could be the reason why many institutions on the school level are reluctant to integrate mobile devices in the learning process in classrooms. There is also the issue of ML potentially changing the dynamic of social behaviour and etiquette in class which is part of a wider social readjustment we are facing upon the rise of technology in our lives nowadays (Stifterverband, 2016). On another note, when it comes to digital technology in education, it is a huge misconception among people that ML could replace teachers. We almost never find evidence of that in academic and professional educational studies. UNESCO (2013) recommends providing opportunities for teachers to be trained and invested in ML. One mistake that policymakers usually do is that they spend on equipping schools with technologies more than investing in teachers training. We need trained teachers who are able to leverage these technologies to create successful pedagogical content. We also need to give educators the space needed to share strategies and use ML for their own career development endeavours (UNESCO, 2013, p.31-32). Now, when it comes to pedagogical content, Zhang (2015) argues that when designing mobile learning programs, we first need to take into consideration ‘the different characteristics of mobile devices and mobile learners’ (p.22). Educational programmes should be designed to be accessible from mobile phones as well as laptops and other portable devices. Additionally, they must be made with innovative content and communication functions (Zhang, 2015, p.22). The right content may exist, however it might lack relevance to students. Language for local populations in many countries could be a huge barrier. Some designs might also lack support for people with disabilities (UNESCO, 2013, p.33). These are issues, which need to be taken into consideration when designing content for ML. We simply need inclusive innovative content that could provide revolutionary new methods of teaching and learning. If we want to make ML a common mean in education, we need to evaluate, develop and monitor its use. However, on a positive note, ML still has the potential to make a difference and it is already enhancing educational opportunities for many learners, which this study will continue to discuss further.
2.1.2.2 Mobile Learning and refugees

When it comes to the use of mobile technologies, we cannot help but think about the role technology has played during the recent refugee crisis. According to UNHCR (2016b) refugees nowadays consider their mobile devices and the ability to access the internet to be as important as basic needs for their survival. Mobile devices are essential means for refugees to stay connected with their loved ones and have access to information and services. During their dangerous trip to their desired destination, refugees use mobile connectivity to navigate their way and search for services in places they have never stepped foot into before. Additionally, it goes as far as considering mobile devices to be a protection tool for them during their trip as they leverage them to call friends if arrested, or to alert each other in case of raids or danger of any kind (UNHCR, 2016b, p.18). When it comes to education, mobile connectivities can also offer solutions for people on the move. Refugees will not probably carry textbooks around while trying to reach safety, but they can carry a mobile device. As mentioned before in this study, the average time of displacement for refugees can last up to 20 years. Mobile technology can help identifying some of the challenges faced by education emergency responses. For IDPs, asylum seekers in refugee camps and even legally identified refugees in rural and urban areas, ML can provide access to educational opportunities and open educational resources (OER). It provides affordable tools for refugees who might not have physical access to education (UNESCO, 2017a, p.20). Many NGOs and UN agencies are working on the ground now to invest in mobile technologies to provide educational opportunities for refugees. UNICEF is making efforts in neighbouring countries to Syria to provide education for Syrian children in refugee camps (UNESCO, 2017b). UNHCR continuously encourages the involvement of the private sector to provide internet connectivity and mobile devices for displaced people in Africa and elsewhere (UNHCR, 2016b) and the list goes on.

Emergency education programmes are usually scattered and incompatible with different personal needs of adult and young refugees. In many cases, there is also the barrier of language and potential social struggles pertaining to integration of new refugees. ML offers the opportunity to leverage already existing connectivities in the
refugees’ surrounding. Refugees tend to have the same access to the internet as people in the area they reside in (UNHCR, 2016b). We are in need to leverage that to provide prompt and strategic responses in order to fulfil refugees’ potentials. As for Syrian refugees in Europe, which this study is concerned with, multiple efforts has been done to facilitate their education efforts via ML. One of the things that refugees struggle with is learning the language of their host country. Language is vital for them to find jobs later or pursue further educational endeavours. It is the first thing that refugees need to focus on upon arrival. This could specially be a challenge for children, who usually need to be back to school immediately, but with no knowledge of the language of instruction, they can simply full behind. Language learning applications available free of charge via phone applications or online platforms assist refugees through this educational journey. Similar platforms could be in use to provide assessment pertaining to vocational training (GIZ, 2016). As for higher education (HED), ML can be used to create academic online opportunities for refugees who may not have the documentations or credential needed to be accepted into a regular university course. As an example, Germany as the host of almost half a million Syrian refugees is using multiple online solutions to provide HED for the newcomers. Universities like Fern Universität offer open online academic and language training courses. Online universities like Kiron is now acting as a conduit for students to take courses online in collaboration with MOOC providers like EdX and Coursera to qualify students to eventually move to physically attend a German university programme. Other universities like Leuphana Digital School offer non-university online training to support practical needs for the job market (Unangst, 2017).

Individual educational needs of refugees are not the only concern in an emergency situation. The readiness for education systems and teachers to deal with refugees is another major affair. According to GIZ (2016), many initiatives have been made by major NGOs like INEE and IRC to use mobile technology for teacher training. The demand of a quick and dynamic solution for receiving an influx of students with special concerns like refugees, could be facilitated by ML. It is useful for providing access to training materials in developing regions and allow interaction

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3 MOOC: massive open online courses
to discuss pedagogical capacities in order to create ‘healing classrooms’ (GIZ, 2016, p.14-15). There are definitely challenges to be met on all domains of education for refugees. The role of ML stands as a mean to reach dynamic solutions for instant demand for educational opportunities for refugees, asylum seekers and IDPs. This study, for reasons discuss earlier, will focus on the individual experience of refugees and the effects of using ML on their action and agency.

2.1.3 Korsgaard, Kant and Education

This section provides an introduction to Emmanuel Kant and his Philosophy. Then it introduces Christine Korsgaard and views a quick description of her philosophy as well.

2.1.3.1 Kantian Philosophy

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy describes Immanuel Kant as the ‘central figure in modern philosophy’. Kant was born in 1724 in the Baltic city of Königsberg in the former German state of Prussia (currently Kaliningrad, Russia). He spent all his life and died there. Kant did not fancy the religious education he received as a child, but he understood what religion could stand for to people of belief. Growing up in a family of artisans made him appreciate a life built on hard work, honesty and independence (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2010). Perhaps this is what influenced his own ethical philosophy that stepped away from the exaltation of religion and focused on reason and sense of consideration to other people. Kant devoted himself to philosophy and published many books. He mostly wrote about metaphysics and ethics but also took interest in aesthetics and other disciplines. He is considered one of the major figures of the age of Enlightenment and one of the pillars of German Idealism. His work is considered a bridge between the two antithetical schools of philosophy in the 18th century, which are Empiricism and Rationalism (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2010).
What this study is concerned with is Kant’s work on ethics and morality, which his educational thoughts emanate from. Kantian philosophy is concerned with individuals as agents, while utilitarianism, which could be considered the antithesis of Kantianism, looks at the person as a subject of experiences. Kantians are always concerned with what we do as agents. Their philosophy is agent-centred even when they discuss persons as objects; their focus is always on agency (Korsgaard, 1996b). For Kant, morality is a system of principles that agents place on themselves; thus, it comes from within us. However, we should constantly work on ourselves to develop our morality, and in particular our respect for the moral law. This is because Kant believes that humans have a predisposition to animality. Being moral beings constantly obliges us to develop incentives coming from those predispositions and also gain skills to choose which of these incentives we should act upon. This study discusses those ideas and displays how Kant thinks that following principles of the moral law, which is reflected by the predisposition to personality, can make us into self-conscious beings (Korsgaard, 1998). In his published work *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), Kant introduces what is considered the central idea to his philosophy, which is the moral law. It is a principle of morality that we can follow to determine which of our incentives we should act upon, that is the incentive of the principle of self-love or the incentive of the moral law. The moral law is derived from pure reason and it is a duty which we have to comply by if we want to be moral. There is a variety of formulations of the moral law, the first one is the universalisability principle. It says that we should act according to a rule of action (maxim) that can be willed as a universal law (something that should be done in similar circumstances). The second formulation focuses on humanity, and it says that we should treat other people as ends in themselves and not as mere means. The third formulation is about setting examples for other people by being legislators of the universal law. This is our responsibility as moral beings (Morse, 1997; Baron, 2009). Another principle of moral reason that Kant mentions in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* is the hypothetical imperative. It states that if you will an end then you must will the means to this end (Korsgaard, 2009). The moral law does not imply that all people act morally, but it sets the tone as it merely supplies the ground for assessing actions and their worth (Morse, 1997). This study will elaborate more on these principles further in upcoming chapters. However, one thing that stands out
from what was mentioned is that moral reason comes from within us, from what Kant calls free will. When we comply by principles of reason to contemplate inclinations and make a conscious decision, we are demonstrating free will. Kant thinks that we are ‘godlike’ in that sense. Being active agents and respecting the moral law is a kind of hard work that makes us intellectually divine (Korsgaard, 1998). This is where the idea of our self-worth as human beings comes into the picture. We have duties to oneself inasmuch as we have duties to others (Baron, 2009).

When it comes to education Kant actually wrote very little about it. Perhaps the very direct resource of Kant’s ideas regarding education comes from lectures that he held at the University of Königsberg in the 1770s and 80s. They were edited and published later under the title Lectures on Education. In them he mostly discusses the upbringing of children and how to raise them to be moral beings. However, his advocacy of the need for educational thinking goes beyond that. We can find an approach to endorsing education in most of his work (Løvlie, 2012). Kantians that came after him in addition to interested scholars have discussed his ideas on education and linked his philosophy to the importance of education. They elaborated on his idea of the highest good, and the need for education for human beings to be able to cultivate it and aspire to moral perfection. Kant argues that us as imperfect beings will always have the tendency to act upon our predisposition of self-love; thus, educating ourselves to cultivate those predispositions is one of the most difficult tasks that we could be presented with (Roth & Surprenant, 2012). However, this is not to say that things that could be related to self-love like happiness are immoral for Kant. This is considered an incorrect analysis that non-Kantians usually conduct. Kant thinks that goodwill is something that is limitlessly good. As long as desires like happiness arise from goodwill and are subordinated to the moral law, they are good (Roth & Surprenant, 2012). In many ways, Kant’s ideas of education are inclusive. His imperatives do not allow for human classification. Thus, in education, all learners of all ages and physical or mental abilities are ‘from the ken of humanity’ as all human learners must be considered as ends in themselves and not mere means (Løvlie, 2012). This is where the significance of discussing self-worth from a Kantian perspective comes to light.
2.1.3.2 Christine Korsgaard

Christine M. Korsgaard is an American philosopher and considered one of the most influential moral philosophers of our time. Her research interests are moral philosophy, the history of ethics, practical reason, agency, personal identity, and human/animal relations (Harvard university, n.d.). When she was a PhD candidate at Harvard University, she studied under the supervision of Martha Nussbaum and John Rawls. Her dissertation revolved around the foundations of practical reason. She started to look at the work of both Aristotle and Kant in that regard but ended up focusing mostly on Kant (Schapiro, 2015). In an interview with the University of Groningen (2014), Korsgaard says that Kant and Aristotle are the two heroes of her philosophical work. She claims that she holds an uncommon opinion that Kant and Aristotle’s ideas are compatible and complementary of each other, which is usually not what many other philosophers think of them. In general, most of Korsgaard’s work is centred around Kant. She is considered a Kantian philosopher. In the same interview, Korsgaard argues that what is special about Kant and Aristotle is that they ground the idea of ethical truth in practical reason, which is independent of an ontological support. As for Kant, Korsgaard says that his philosophy holds the important idea of freedom and autonomy of human beings in ethics, which she finds appealing (University of Groningen, 2014).

During the preparation of this study, many references were read to view Kant’s work. However, Korsgaard’s published lectures and books were found to be the most comprehensive and enjoyable to read. She cultivates the complicated literature of Kant and simplifies it into a straightforward, yet thorough language of discussion. Her book *Self-Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity* (2009) in specific is essential to this study as it adequately deciphers the Kantian perspective of agency, action, reason and their relationship to autonomy, efficacy and value. Her work goes beyond only viewing Kant into developing his ideas and coming up with her own philosophy that complements the goals and objectives of this thesis. Therefore, This study will heavily rely on Korsgaard’s discussion of action, reason and the constitution of agency. She believes that we constitute our agency by ‘choosing our actions in accordance with the principles of practical reason’ (Korsgaard, 2008, p.1). This study
is based on Korsgaard's comprehensive philosophy to discuss in details how refugee learners render themselves efficacious and autonomous through conducting practical reason that stems from practical identity and how ML solutions can support that. Then it will connect this to the value of agency as a process, which arguably leads to self-worth.

2.2 Literature Review

This section reviews the ideas in Korsgaard’s philosophy, which this study base its foundation upon. The next few subsections discuss a flow of ideas to introduce the concepts of agency and action and their relation to reason and character. Then they comprehensively elaborate on autonomy and efficacy in order to continue discussing their role in the next subsection, which discusses the idea of value and its relation to agents’ identity. After a thorough discussion of these philosophical ideas, the remaining subsections intersect Korsgaard’s philosophy and the experience of refugees. Then finally proposes the use of ML for refugees as an educational mean to reach a sense of self-worth.

2.2.1 Korsgaard’s philosophy:

2.2.1.1 Agency, Action and Reason

In philosophy and sociology, agency is the capacity to act, and an agent is an entity with the ability to act (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2015). In her book *Self-constitution, Agency, Identity, and Integrity* (2009), Christine Korsgaard elaborates on agency and action from the Kantian perspective. She states that action is unavoidable, as even when you refuse to act, you are actually taking the action of not acting. So, action is necessary. Rational necessity entails that “if you will the end, then you must will the means” (Korsgaard, 2009, p.1). She further discusses another necessity of action that is embodied in social obligations and duties, which ‘demands’
action. We can, however, choose not to follow them as they do not stem from our inner reason and hold a space for normativity. Nevertheless, Korsgaard says that we do abide by actions that are demanded of us anyway, and this according to Kant is called *necessitation* (Korsgaard, 2009, p.3). This should not be misinterpreted, as it usually does, as a psychological force imposed on human agency. Necessitation as an experience is ‘work’. It is an everlasting struggle of the normative nature of our reason that humans go through in their journey as rational agents (Korsgaard, 2009, p.7). So if actions are unavoidable, how do they function and how do they relate to agency and reason?

Kant believes that actions are ruled by maxims and that they are of a “to-do-this-act-for-the-sake-of-this-end” structure. Korsgaard (2009) elaborates on this saying that an action is constituted by an act and an end in addition to the means that the agent acts upon to reach the end, all of these as a package are called *action*. So in order to apply the moral law on an action and decide whether it is right or wrong, we need to look at the action as a whole (Korsgaard, 2009, p.10-12). If I lie to a stranger in order to protect myself from a suspicious intention that I think this stranger has, what needs to be judged is not the fact that I lied, but that I lied to protect myself. The whole action as a package is what needs to be evaluated against the moral law. Korsgaard (2009) says that this idea helps us to understand Aristotle’s notion of action. He believed that some actions are done for their own sake, for a ‘good action itself is its end’. Elaborating on that, Korsgaard gives the example of ‘dancing for the sheer joy of dancing’ without any further purpose or aim behind it as an action other than its own (Korsgaard, 2009, p.9-12).

When it comes to identifying actions, contemporary philosophers tend to treat reasons of actions as the purpose behind them. This could be misleading according to Korsgaard as it specifies the reason for acts and not for actions as a whole. She gives here the example of an agent driving from a city all the way to another city only to buy paperclips. In this case we will not accept that the purpose behind driving to

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4 In philosophy, *Reason* is identified as the ‘active aspect of the mind’ which is opposite of the perceptive or emotional part. In the introduction of her book *The Constitution of Agency* (2008) Korsgaard also explains that reason could traditionally means the implementation of rational principles in addition to the substantive reasons in favour of belief and action. As Korsgaard (2008) puts it, all the three meanings are “aspects of a single human capacity”.

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Another important thing to acknowledge when it comes to human agency and action is what motivates agency. According to Kant, when agency takes place, actions are always induced by two things, an incentive$^5$ and a principle. "The incentive is the thing that presents the action to your mind as eligible; the principle is what determines whether it is in fact to be chosen or not" (Korsgaard, 2009, p.22). Activities, circumstances, material things and such, all can be represented by an incentive. Korsgaard describes them as ‘objects’. When we realise the effect of an object on us, when we think that it is attractive, catchy, or even repulsive or distressing, we are in this case ‘subject to an incentive’. Incentives, however, do not have a compulsory influence on us. They do not cause the action; because thanks to the reflective nature of our human mind, we reflect on them and decide if we will take them as reasons to act or not (Roth, 2011, p.258-259). So, we can actually control the inclination we have as a result of incentives. If based on our identities or principles find an incentive not suitable for us to act upon, we can decide to not take it as a reason to act.

We cannot explain incentives without talking about principles, as the two work in pairs. In order to decide whether we should take an incentive as a reason to act or not, we need to view this reason as part of our principles (Roth, 2011, p.259). This way we follow the Kantian ‘Constitutional Model’; it is basically how we constitute our agency. An inclination exhibits a proposal, we reflect on it with reason, which is part of a principle and decide if we want to consider it as an inclination to act, and then we

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$^5$ The Oxford dictionary identifies the word *incentive* as: “A thing that motivates or encourages someone to do something” (https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/incentive)
take a decision (Korsgaard, 2008, p.110). While incentives are external, principles come from within us, and they determine our response to those incentives (Korsgaard, 1998). For Kant, there are three principles of practical reason\(^6\) in philosophy. The first one is the *instrumental principle*. According to this principle, our practical rationality directs us to take our means to reach our ends (Korsgaard, 2008). So, simply, if you will the end you will the means in order to reach that end. However, this principle does not specify what those means or acts are. People can will different acts using various means towards different ends\(^7\), and even the action’s purpose can vary as well. That’s why Kant calls it the *hypothetical imperative* (Roth, 2011, p.260). So this principle is a general ‘principle of practical judgment’ as Korsgaard (2009) puts it. It covers any action the agent is self-conscious about. The second principle is the *principle of prudence*, or what Korsgaard (2008) also calls ‘rational self-interest’. We use this when we do an action to maximise the pleasure of a certain end. Happiness is a very good example of an end that we may seek to maximise. In contrast with the hypothetical imperative, the principle of prudence specifies the end (Roth, 2011, p.260).

The third principle is what Kant considered the supreme imperative of reason as well as the supreme principle of morality. He called it, the categorical imperative or the *moral law*. According to this principle, our actions need to take the ‘form of a moral conduct’ that originates from universal principles of the moral law. This means that when we act, we should always ask ourselves if the reason we are about to use to constitute our action could be universally moral. In Kantian philosophy, this reasoning is called *universalisability* (Korsgaard, 2008). For example, if an agent is standing in a local market next to a bakery stand, she is hungry and has no money to buy a piece of bread. Meanwhile, the baker is not paying attention and she can easily steal a loaf of bread and run. Would it be ok for her to steal?. According to the moral law, if she did steal from the baker, her reasoning should be whether she thinks that stealing in this case is something that is acceptable for all human agents in the world to do. In other words, if it is ok for her to steal, then it is ok for everyone to steal. Now, regardless of what she chooses to do, the reason she goes with to constitute her

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\(^6\) “Practical reason is the general human capacity for resolving, through reflection, the question of what one is to do.” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

\(^7\) In Kantian philosophy, those ends need to be willed not only desired (Korsgaard, 2008).
action is the reason that she personally would think that is morally universal. If she thinks that stealing is wrong, she will never steal no matter how hungry she is. However, the moral law is more complicated than this and it implies other ideas to moral reason such as treating people as ends in themselves and the responsibility of being a moral agent. Kant thinks that to be able to act upon the categorical imperative and make a reasoning depending on whether your action could be willed to be a universal law or not, you need to be autonomous (Korsgaard, 2009, p.48).

For the purpose of the study, this thesis will focus on the first and third principles, the moral law (categorical imperative) and the hypothetical imperative. The immediate difference between them is their conception of morality. The moral law takes on formal principles of reason like universalisability. The hypothetical imperative, on the other hand, adopts substantive principles that are 'self-evident rational requirements' like being honest and keeping our word (Korsgaard, 2008, p. 6). Both imperatives are constitutive principles of action. Korsgaard (2009) sheds the light on the fact that for Kantians, the two imperatives are closely pound together. The categorical imperative actually encompasses the hypothetical imperative in the way that they both involve a maxim that can be willed as a universal law. The hypothetical imperative though is distinct in the idea that it indicates certain laws that we choose for ourselves (Korsgaard, 2009, p.81). To understand why we need both imperatives, we need to discuss the other distinction that Korsgaard points out. She elaborates on Kant’s idea of doing actions for their own sake and treating actions and even agents as ends in themselves. The hypothetical imperative is concerned more with acts and how they reach their end. However, the moral law ‘governs the choice of actions’ as a whole (Korsgaard, 2009, p.82). Now what happens to us when we successfully implement actions according to these imperatives, and how would that affect our agency? This will be discussed in the next chapter.

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8 “a formal conception of morality identifies it with a method of reasoning about practical issues” (Korsgaard, 2009, p.47).

9 “a substantive conception of morality identifies morality in terms of its content” (Korsgaard, 2009, p. 47)
2.2.1.2 Autonomy and Efficacy

Korsgaard believes that ‘action is self-constitution’; it is what constitutes an agent. Moreover, she argues that an agent has two characteristics: efficacy and autonomy. When an agent is successful in bringing about the intended state of affairs, she renders herself efficacious. This also applies to actions that are done for their own sake, as an agent needs to efficaciously conduct actions even when they are ends in themselves (Korsgaard, 2009, p.82). On the other hand, autonomy is what enables the agent to have self-determined reason of action to view herself as the cause of her actions. It is what allows us to act upon the moral law and will actions that we think could be universal laws (Korsgaard, 2009). It is also about acting upon what we think is a good concept. Additionally, it is related to our identity and self-worth as it depends on who we think we are (Korsgaard, 1996a). Based on Korsgaard’s discussion, Roth (2011) argues that we constitute ourselves efficacious and autonomous through the hypothetical imperative and the moral law but not through the principle of prudence. The cause of that according to Kantian philosophy is that for a moral agent, reason should be the cause of action and not merely his emotional urges (p.260-261).

We constitute our agency by rendering ourselves autonomous through the moral law and rendering ourselves efficacious through the hypothetical imperative (Korsgaard, 2008, p.13). This is basically how we constitute our agency and reason a successful action. Additionally, governed by those principles, we can comprehend our agency in various ways. We can render ourselves as efficacious agents who are capable of fulfilling willed ends effectively. On the other hand we can also realise our autonomy by owning the ability to direct our actions and be the composers of those actions (Roth, 2001, p. 261). This thesis will build a big chunk of its argument on the idea of autonomy\(^\text{10}\) and efficacy and their impact on agents and their identity.

\(^\text{10}\) Some other schools of thought criticise the idea of Kantian autonomy for being asocial or isolated. However, Kantians defend their notion by stating that Kant's idea of autonomous agents makes them relevant to society and the world around them by understanding themselves first and reasoning universal laws. It is worth mentioning here that in philosophy, going back and forth with criticism and discussions as such is basically a pillar in the nature of this discipline. So, anything that is build on philosophy could be an object of harsh criticism by others. Again, it is the nature of the discipline which is something that Korsgaard clearly embraces in her books (Korsgaard, 1996, 2008, 2009).
Kant calls those who do not render themselves autonomous ‘heteronomous’ beings. They are, in his opinion, unable to make sense of their own reason and are affected by others. They are unable to reflect on the means they use to achieve their goals or why or how they achieve those goals or why they have them. Their values and beliefs are entirely shaped by others. For example, when it comes to education, heteronomous beings are able to appreciate the technical and social skills required for learning but they do not endorse critical or reflective thinking. (Roth, 2011, p.265). Thus, according to Kant, these beings are unable to benefit from education for desired ends.

As human agents, we are constantly responsible for forming our character through understanding our agency and performing action. When we act as efficacious and autonomous agents we effectively take our means to our ends and autonomously make ourselves the cause of our actions. This in itself is work, whether we do it in education or any other aspect of our life. Most importantly, as we do this work and take actions to achieve our intended ends, we experience a feeling of self-esteem, but also a feeling of respect for others, which awakens the sensation of self-worth within us (Roth, 2011, p.262-263).

2.2.1.3 Value and Identity

According to Korsgaard (2009), agents perform actions the same way thinkers have thoughts. For Kant, a thinker and an agent in this case are not separate. Korsgaard (2009) argues that a human agent needs to have unity of both to be able to constitute him/herself. It is what separates us from other animals. The unity of integrity\(^{11}\) human agents possess makes them the ‘masters of their own movements’. This is what makes their choices their own. When we reflect on choices and decide whether we want to act upon them or not, we constitute our identity (Korsgaard, 2009, p.18-20). As human beings, we are responsible for ‘making something’ of

\(^{11}\) We usually use the term ‘integrity’ to refer to an act of being honest and living up to standards, but Korsagaard here uses the metaphysical meaning of the word which implies a state of unity, oneness and being undivided (Korasgaard, 1996a, p.102).
ourselves; thus, in addition to personal identity, we have practical identity. It is an identity that we constitute from what we value ourselves to be, and as Korsgaard puts it, what makes our ‘life to be worth living’ and ‘actions to be worth undertaking’ (Korsgaard, 1996a, p.14). In her book *The Sources of Normativity* (1996), Korsgaard calls this ‘a conception of practical identity’ (Korsgaard, 1996, p.120). This conception includes identifying ourselves with things like being a citizen of a certain country, or someone’s family member, or a member of a certain group, or simply as a man or a woman, anything that embodies being part of something that is of a significance to us. This produces reason and obligation, and reason is what governs our action. Taking action governed by our identity gives us a sense of value (Korsgaard, 1996a). This is how the idea of Kantian agency and action relates to identity and value; hence, our sense of self-worth. To have self-worth is to realise our own human identity as rational agents in addition to our contingent practical identities. Korsgaard puts it this way:

“if you do not allow yourself to be governed by any conception of your identity then you will have no reason to act and to live. So a human being is an animal who needs a practical conception of her own identity, a conception of who she is” (Korsgaard, 1996a, p.123).

Conceptions of identity, particularly practical identity, rule choice the same way morality does. It is a source of incentives. Kant and Aristotle talk about duties and noble causes stemming from identity as purposes for action. Korsgaard (2009) adds that what is rendered from identity do not make alternative purposes of action separate from the agent’s own reason. Additionally, they give value to the action as a whole; so, identity gives value to the whole package of doing an act for the sake of an end (action).

Now, what happens when an agent has a sense of self-worth?. Let’s step aside from Korsgaard for a minute and examine an example of how the idea of self-worth impacts agency. Louden (2011) discusses the idea of duties to oneself in Kantian philosophy. He argues that the major pillars of Kant’s philosophy like autonomy and self-legislation, considering human agents, as ends in themselves and
valuing goodwill and freedom, are all significant to the idea of duty to oneself. He adds that the evidence for this is that duties are embedded in the internal moral worth of agents, and the value of their own moral capacity (17-18). So as much as duties and obligations stem from identity and provide a sense of value. This sense itself supports our duties to ourselves; consequently our duties to others. So our practical identity is identified by what we think has value for us, at the same time acting upon inclinations that arise from identity gives value to our agency and actions. However, within human agency, there are other things that could grant us a sense of self-worth. Korsgaard (1998) discusses another Kantian idea that might help us to understand value even further. Kant argues that when we are autonomous agents, we only take our actions to their ends if we can will them as universal laws. However, when that does not happen, and when the act that we are about to do fails the moral law test, we do not do it. This leaves a complex effect on us. Kant calls it ‘respect’; because, although it has a painful effect somehow, it still represents a true self-mastery and presents the morally correct maxims as worth doing (Korsgaard, 1998. p.55). So our agency has value when it follows moral principles even when it comes to the incentives that we do not use as inclinations.

As mentioned earlier in this research, incentives do not cause the action. We respond to them based on a principle, which determines our reaction and turns incentives into motives for action. At this point, us as self-conscious beings, feel an ‘inclination’ to act. Then our own reason decides whether to act or not. This state of awareness and consciousness is the source of free will because we are free to choose what to act upon or how to act (Korsgaard, 1998). In Motivation, Metaphysics, and the Value of the Self: A Reply to Ginsborg, Guyer, and Schneewind (1998), Korsgaard says that it is our dilemma as self-conscious beings to make choices, so we need reason and principles for that. This is the starting point of agency for Kant. We need to move from it through our free will in accordance to a law. However, since our will is free, the law needs to be autonomously constituted. This, according to Korsgaard is the source of value. We regard ourselves of the value of our action and the reason behind it. It is how we view that our ends matter because we matter (Korsgaard, 1998, p.62). However, this is not to deny that humanity is also a source of value in itself. For Kant, we can reach autonomy by
combining humanity with universal laws, so this gives legitimacy to the claim that ‘we human beings legislate the good for ourselves’. Korsgaard agrees with her critic Schneewind that our self-worth is an extension of the value of humanity as we confer value by our own acts (Korsgaard, 1998, p.62-63). From that point, Korsgaard calls humans ‘value-conferring’ agents. Even when abiding by morality, if we do not value ourselves, we cannot value anything else.

In conclusion to this section, we can say that the value of our agency gives us a sensation of self-worth. This value comes basically from our ability to take our acts to their ends (efficacy) and our capacity to practise free will in accordance to our universal laws (autonomy). This value has an interchangeable relationship with our practical identity, which identifies actions that are worthy to be undertaken. Finally, the value that we confer ourselves with is part of our human value, which provides us with a sense of worth and respect towards others and ourselves and humanity as a whole.

2.2.2. The Relation to Education

Korsgaard herself did not publish work that discusses education exclusively. Also, as mentioned earlier, Kant wrote very little about education. Nevertheless, his ideas about educating character are vastly important for education philosophy. The Kantian approach to education and the effect of Kantian ideas on education can be looked at in the work of philosophers who identify with the Kantian School of philosophy, or educators who take interest in those ideas. The same could be applied to Korsgaard. So this section will discuss the relation of what was explored before in this chapter and how it could be tied to education from the point of view of educators who read and study Korsgaard and Kant.

It is fair to say that Kant thought of education as highly important for the ‘constitution of agency’\textsuperscript{12}. He argued that in addition to being natural creatures,

\textsuperscript{12} this expression is Korsgaard’s and not Kant’s.
humans are also transcendental agents. We have desires that make us overlook the moral law sometimes. Thus, we need education to make ourselves into autonomous agents whom actions are respectful of the moral law (Morse, 1997, p.37). Kant’s idea of education focuses on the need to educate our character to be autonomous rational beings. We must strive to not let ourselves be controlled by our ‘predisposition to animality’ and develop our agency by practicing self-control and abiding by the moral law. It is not enough in Kant’s opinion to pursue moral perfection; it is also necessary to do so when it comes to our social and technical skills. This emanates not only from the individual’s efficacy and autonomy, but also from the collective agreement of individuals in an organised society. So when it comes to education, the challenge is highly demanding. A successful education takes on the challenge of developing our practical skills and moral predispositions in addition to passing on acquired values and knowledge to others. All of this is done through rendering learners autonomous and efficacious, and that according to Kant, makes education one of the most challenging issues we devote ourselves to (Roth, 2011, p.266-268). What was previously suggested in this study is that forming our character is not only essential for human agents but also described as work. Korsgaard puts it this way: “being a person, having a personal identity, being a rational agent, is in itself a form of work” (Korsgaard, 2009, p.26). When we are efficacious and autonomous, we are able to make our own decisions and realise our choices. However, this is not an easy task, and we do not always enjoy that freedom in life. This is why rendering ourselves efficacious and autonomous in society or in aspects like education is considered a form of work (Roth, 2011, p.264-265).

Based on Korsgaard’s discussion of Kant, Roth (2011) illustrates what education in the Kantian perspective would be concerned with. In the process of developing our predisposition through education, we acquire and improve social and technical skills. Additionally, we constantly obtain skills that will help us to free our will from predispositions of our own desires. Education also offers an opportunity for us to strive for self-perfection. Consequently, we render ourselves efficacious and autonomous to perform actions and will that for others. Additionally, it upholds our freedom, especially those of us who always act upon morality and care about the ‘destiny of man’; it gives them moral worth (Roth, 2011, p.269-270). When it comes to
moral worth, Johnston (2006) argues that education equip learners with the capacity to develop duties to oneself and construct maxims to lead a dutiful life. This starts, he argues, with children students but it is a never-ending process. Adults continue to build themselves for self-perfection as moral education stretches out to practical self-education. This means that learners while aspiring for moral worth, they build up practices of living (Johnston, 2006, p.397).

Løvlie (2012) argues that Kant’s eighteenth-century philosophy is applicable to educational thinking even today. First, because it holds a liberal way of thinking about education that illuminates educating based on small self-governing communities (communitarianism), which suits very well the universalism of our modern societies. Second, it holds respect to agents being self-sufficient in creating their own personality. Third, because of its transcendental way of thinking, it renders us aware of the possibilities and limitations of education. For Løvlie (2012), these features of educational thinking in addition to Kant’s ideas of humanity, freedom, and ethical self-governance could really contribute to a modern society.

2.2.3 How It All Ties Together

This study has showcased so far the Kantian philosophy and its idea of agency and action from the modern philosopher Christine Korsgaard. It discussed the escalating issue of refugee influxes in the world nowadays and specified discussing the issue of Syrian refugees in Europe. Additionally, it viewed the influence of Mobile Learning on modern-day education and its importance for refugees. But how all of these concepts tie together?. What is the relation between refugees, ML and agency?. This section is dedicated to link all of these concepts to exhibit how the experience of being a refugee is closely related to agency. Furthermore, how it interchangeably relates to identity and value, and how ML can be a mean to empower refugees’ self-worth.

There is a huge psychological impact of the experience of being a refugee. One major issue that stands out the most is their sense of belonging. Refugees do
not enjoy the protection of the country of their nationality. They get ripped away from their reality, their home, familiar environment and loved ones. Their perception of who they are gets completely distorted. In a study done on the well-being of African refugees (King, Heinonen, Uwabor & Adeleye-Olusae, 2016) showcase that experiencing the hardships of a dangerous journey then resettling in a new society can be extremely stressful for refugees. The study views that many refugees develop a fear of what they view as authority figures like the police or social workers. They become hesitant to give clear answers when asked questions by such figures. This could be traced back to traumas they have experienced in their home country or during their trip, where they may needed to fear for their lives from people who hold power over them. Also, these fears could generate from the feeling of being misunderstood or stereotyped by their host communities (King et al., 2016, p.8). These feelings could confuse them to the point where they start questioning their identity. Things as simple as using certain social gestures that may mean something in their culture but seem strange in the new society may make them cautious about being spontaneous and lead them to wonder how they could present their culture (King et al., 2016, p.9). According to Korsgaard identifying ourselves with the culture and places we come from is what constitutes our practical identity, which demonstrates choices of actions, and what we think is worth acting upon. Taking actions governed by our identity gives us a sense of value (Korsgaard, 1996a). However, that is only when that particular identity is autonomously chosen, which is not the case for refugees. So when the dynamic of practicing our identity is distorted, it shakes our sense of self-worth. King et al. (2016) describe that when refugees’ cultural and social values are unrecognised and challenged they start to question their value (p.9). The loss of status and devaluation of their social identity make refugees feel that their value worth less than that of the people of their host community. Moreover, refugees’ struggle with financial constraints and their ability to care for their family in light of their new circumstance also affects their identity as caregivers. Many practical, social and cultural aspects of refugees’ lives could be affected by changes leading to self-doubt, which affects refugees’ identity (King et al., 2016).
If we have learned anything from Korsgaard so far, it is the flow of constituting our agency. Objects around us evoke incentives; we take incentive to be proposals for action. Then we use our reason that goes hand in hand with our principles and identity to make decisions of what incentives we will act upon. This decision stems from our free will that is the source of value. When we practise this flow to take our acts to their ends using means, and when we do that efficaciously and autonomously, we constitute our agency (Korsgaard, 1996a, 2008 & 2009). So, identities are part of our reason, they go hand in hand together to form our principles in which we use to make decisions for actions. So, in the case of refugees, the flow of creating one’s agency is interrupted, which puts them in danger of becoming heteronomous beings. Heteronomous agents are unable to render themselves efficacious and autonomous and their actions are not autonomously willed. Kant suggests that heteronomous actions are governed solely by the hypothetical imperative (Korsgaard, 2009, p. 81-82). So agents in this case can take their acts to their ends but without being self-determined about the actions they undertake. Refugees usually are subject to becoming heteronomous characters as they submit to already existing identities and lose their ability to determine which of these identities they want to act upon or move away from. Belonging to a nation state could be a very good example in this case. One can argue that a person will always belong to his country no matter where he is. However, Korsgaard says that valuing oneself as a citizen of a nation is about ratifying the reasons and obligations that comes with that citizenship, because this is how we see ourselves (Korsgaard, 2009, p.24). For refugees who arrive from countries torn by war, it is hard for many of them to ratify reasons of belonging to that country. Many of them experience civil war, which can rattle social values and pull apart relationships with other fellow citizens. The fact that they are refugees replaces this notion. For many of them, they heteronomously submit to the idea of being only refugees and nothing else. Their feeling of being strangers to their new host community, who are not able to live with some of their loved ones and cannot practise their ordinary professions, takes over their agency. In many cases, especially at the beginning of their asylum experience, refugees limit themselves to such heteronomous identities. This is one of the possible results of losing their ability to confer positive value to their actions. At the beginning of their asylum experience, they cannot decide where to live or what to do. They are placed in refugee camps by
their host countries and in many cases forced to reside in a certain city or area. They cannot immediately practise their usual professions and in many cases they cannot be legally reunited with their loved ones who may live in different locations. Their freedom in this case is severely limited, so is their free will to take actions. According to Korsgaard (2009), if an agent has free will she cannot be heteronomous; because in order to practise that free will, agents need to be autonomous (p.153). So, refugees need to rebuild their autonomy and regain their ability to freely set self-chosen ends for themselves.

Submitting to heteronomous identities could also be a result of the challenges that refugees face while dealing with the pressures of adapting to a new job market and culture of work. That, in addition to a higher demand of academic credentials could also affect practical identities. This is something that refugees in Europe highly relate to. Refugees have their practical identities in the sense that they are heteronomous identities. This is because the actuality of agency is embodied in practical situations. So, since they are unable to render themselves autonomous as well as efficacious in practice, they cannot confer value to their actions. In another sense, agents find value in their ability to set ends and reach them in addition to realising that they are the cause of reaching those ends. When that feeling is blurred in refugees’ minds, they lose their sense of self-worth. That being said, the solution to this problem could be the rebuilding of agency via adopting new practical identities. To do so, refugees need to structure new practical identities in which they are efficacious and autonomous, which means that they freely choose their ends and act upon reaching them. That happens in addition to acknowledging the already existing heteronomous identities like being Syrian or being a teacher or a refugee and freely choosing which of these they want to maintain or move on from. So what this study suggests is that education has the potential to help refugees to render themselves efficacious and autonomous. It could help them to take more control and may lead them to better understand their existing identities. Korsgaard states that “our conception of what a person is depends in a deep way on our conception of ourselves as agents” (Korsgaard, 1996b, p.264). So, does a good education have the potential to empower refugees to better understand themselves as agents and regain their self-worth?. This study suggests that it could be possible because in the
process of education, we constantly gain skills to free our will and strive for self-perfection. It empowers our freedom to render ourselves efficacious and autonomous. In that, we master performing actions and learn the value of our agency (Roth, 2011). To be efficacious is to be able to take our acts to our ends through means. It is to think of ourselves teleologically\footnote{Teleology: explaining phenomena in terms of the purpose they serve rather than the cause by which they arise (https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/teleology)} as the cause of those ends. It is the way we act self-consciously (Korsgaard, 2009, p.41). However, to decide whether the action as a whole is worth undertaking, we follow the moral law and hypothetical imperative. We are autonomous when we are self-determined (Korsgaard, 2009, p. 83). We can still do action regardless of these two aspects, but for the action to be successful, we need to render ourselves both efficacious and autonomous. Roth (2011) argues that education can help us to achieve successful actions, but it is at the same time hard work because we do not always have the liberty to control everything around us. This liberty is definitely not always available in the case of refugees. Based on what was discussed before, this study suggests that due to the interruptions with the flow of refugees’ self-constitution, it is possible that a good education can offer an opportunity to rebuild new practical identities or mend already existing ones. As a result, these identities could be the source of a renewed sense of self-worth. However, a good education does not only teach social and practical skills, it also teaches morality and strive for the perfection of human beings. It renders agents efficacious and autonomous and aims for harmonious humanity (Roth, 2011). So a good education might not only be able to provide us with mostly needed practical skills, it also prepares us to better understand our humanity. This has the potential to render refugees able to regain a sense of identity of who they are and where they come from and why they undertake their actions; thus, has the potential to provide them with a sense of self-worth. However, this is not at all an easy endeavour and it requires real effort and is, as discussed before, a matter of hard work in itself.
2.2.4 The Mobile Learning Solution

What this study has done so far is showcasing the importance of education for refugees in terms of empowering their agency and value. However, this is not to say that education could simply solve all the problems mentioned earlier. However, the suggestion here is that education could be a way to help refugees to successfully constitute their actions to gain self-worth. If we suppose that self-worth represents an end for refugees, then they must take means in order to achieve this end. ML could be one of the means for that end.

In the scope of refugee learning environments in Europe. Refugees can use ML as a shortcut for a faster recovery from their asylum experience. The whole experience of being a refugee demands a revolution in one’s lifelong learning process. Refugees need to learn about their new country, rights, duties and new socio-cultural atmosphere in addition to a new job market. So learning becomes a daily part of their lives, at least for the first few years of asylum. While education systems of host country may struggle with providing quick quality response, ML could provide solutions to support refugees in a certain learning curve. Pachler, Bachmair & Cook (2010) view the emanation of learning through mobile devices as an educational response to complex changes. They also see learning as meaning-making within an individualised society. However, the task is not easy. Roth (2012) argues that the way the economy sets its goals in the EU follows a ‘capitalist mode of rational decision-making’, which may encourage citizens to be efficacious but not necessary autonomous (p.215-216). Citizens are required to have certain ends in their subjective norms of action. They need to develop their capacities to output knowledge in the market as efficiently as it gets. As much as this could take their acts to their ends, their actions still lack the autonomy that stems from being the legislators of the principles pertaining to these actions. (Roth, 2012, p.215-216). So if Europeans themselves are subject to submitting to heteronomous identities, then one can only imagine how much this could impact refugees, who are already lost in a new work culture.
ML is believed to have the potential to reinforce education systems and foster personalised learning through lifelong learning experiences (UNESCO, 2017c). So, this study is aiming to test the idea of using ML as a mean to render refugees both efficacious and autonomous even within a challenging context. It can be the solution to many immediate needs for refugees like language skills and credentials. When refugees first arrive to their country of asylum, the first learning experience they encounter is learning the language of their host community. Learning the new language becomes a survival mechanism for them as they need it to communicate. However, later on, they need further technical training and academic knowledge to compete in the job market. However, this could be a tiring long and sometimes frustrating process for them. Some refugees hope that they will go back to doing the same professions they used to do back home but they get surprised that their years of experience are not immediately acknowledged. They need to take technical or academic education courses, which could take from 6 months to 3 years to be achieved. For example, refugees who practise crafts like carpentry or blacksmithing and have inherited their profession from their fathers and grandfathers have to be told that their years of experience is not to be recognised. This leaves a huge impact on their sense of self-worth, especially if they confer high positive value to their profession which is basically a practical identity. The same thing is applied to teachers, engineers and doctors who most of the time need to go through a rigorous process for their certificates to be recognised. Moreover, refugees sometimes lack documents that prove their academic achievements. If they have no proof that they have finished their secondary education, it will be hard for them to be accepted in a HED course. Furthermore, in many cases refugees have no proof of finishing a certain number of academic years because they leave their country while studying a HED programme. So, they may be forced to retake the same HED programme again, which could be time consuming and limiting to their choices.

ML may not be a solution for these issues put it can be used as a tool to do so. It could put refugee learners on the right path faster than usual, which contributes to their integration into the job market. Through offering affordable and easy-access online learning materials, courses, platforms and applications, refugees can start preparing for their new academic experience as early as they wish to. This gives
them more freedom to take control of their academic experience, which consequently leads to rebuilding their agency. This is because when they start making autonomous and efficacious decisions in choosing their acts and taking them to their ends via ML for further educational goals, they constitute autonomous and efficacious actions. This way, according to Korsgaard (2009) they free-willingly become the authors of their actions, which leads to constituting their agency (p.45). Therefore, ML as a tool that was not available two decades ago has the potential to be a mean for refugees to have more educational choices while they are sitting at home. All they need is a mobile device and the internet, which are mostly available wherever in Europe. Furthermore, as refugees go on with their experience and work hard through it, they take more educational courses of their choice and build new practical identities in which they confer positive value to. This could empower them to set more ends to themselves with time and take control of their actions. With constant hard work, they could start to step away from unneeded heteronomous identities and replace them with autonomous and efficacious ones, which gives them a sense of self-worth.
Chapter Three

3. Methodology

This chapter explores the Methodology of the study. It first explains the rationale behind the choice of the research strategy. Then it reveals the ontological and epistemological considerations. After that it discusses the research design and why it was chosen for this study. Then it discusses the research method and choice of samples for this method. Furthermore, it explains how the data collected via the research method is analysed. Finally it discusses issues of quality criteria and concludes with revealing the ethical considerations of the study.

3.1 Research Strategy

Due to its theme and objectives, this study adopts a qualitative strategy. According to Bryman (2016) a research strategy is the general orientation to be considered when conducting a social research (p.32). A qualitative strategy showcases social reality as an attribute of individuals’ creation (Bryman, 2016, p.33). The ontologies and epistemologies, that qualitative strategies usually work with focus on the role of social actors and their perception of their context. Therefore, it is a suitable strategy for this study as it focuses on the effect of education on agency, which is deeply related to individuals’ personal experience with education. Moreover, This study is concerned with how refugees feel and relate to challenges around them from a philosophical perspective. As a qualitative strategy focuses on understanding behaviour, values and believes of agents within a social context (Bryman, 2016, p. 401), it is deemed to be appropriate for this study.

A qualitative strategy of research usually takes on an inductive approach to theory. Unlike the deductive approach that is usually used with quantitative research, an inductive study does not start with a theory. It actually generates theory from findings of data, which means that theory is the outcome of research in the inductive approach (Bryman, 2016, p.22). This is exactly what this study intends to present.
After a rigorous view of literature and key concepts, the study hints to what it is anticipated to be revealed at the end, but no theories will be formulated till after the discussion of data analysis. The data will be collected via qualitative interviews. They are a widely used method of data collection and in a qualitative study; they focus on the points of view of interviewees (Bryman, 2016, p.466), which is very useful for this study.

3.2 Epistemology and Ontology

As a qualitative study focusing on the idea of human agency and self-worth, this study is of a constructionist ontology. Constructionism considers that social reality does not exist outside of human conception. It rejects theories that view our context as a pre-given reality in which we have no influence over. On the contrary, it suggests that our reality is the accomplishment of social actors (Bryman, 2016, p.29-30). The concept of self, which this study is concerned with, can be seen as a social construct. Identity is also related to society and what we associate ourselves with. This is another embodiment to the constructionist notion of this study that will continue through the whole research.

Another consideration to be taken into account for this study is its epistemology. It concerns the ‘bases of knowledge’ and its form and nature and how a researcher can understand social phenomena (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p.7). According to Bryman (2016) epistemology is concerned with what makes knowledge acceptable in a discipline (p.24). As for this study, it is driven by an interpretivist epistemology. It looks at the research in a way that understands the meaning people perceive of their context (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Liao (Eds.), 2004). By discussing how ML influences the agency of refugee learners, this study examines how their actions are meaningful to them. Therefore, the data needs to be interpreted from their point of view in order to understand whether this impact on their agency gives them a sense of self-worth. This strategy is very interpretivist in nature. It gives meaning to human action; thus, examines the meaning of social reality for them (Bryman, 2016, p.27).
The ontological and epistemological considerations of this study are supported by its qualitative strategy and inductive approach, which will allow a qualitative method of data collection and analysis to be interpreted in a way that examines agents’ opinion of their experience with ML; thus, maintain a constructionist and interpretivist notion throughout the research.

3.3. Research Design

A research design is the framework for collecting and analysing data. It is also about prioritising certain dimensions of the study that the researcher may want to focus on. This includes the researcher’s decision to give priority to connections between variables, generalising a group of individuals or aspiring to understand social behaviours and their meaning. It is basically the structure that guides the execution of methods in a research (Bryman, 2016, p.40). This study has a comparative design. Bryman (2016) argues that comparing cases could help us to better understand social phenomena using two or more meaningful cases; “we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations” (p.65). In 1995 Mark Bray and Murray Thomas presented a paper entitled Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies: Different Insights from Different Literatures and the Value of Multilevel Analyses. In this paper, they emphasised the value of a multilevel analysis in comparatives researches and presented The Bray and Thomas Cube. It is a representation of three levels, which is meant to be considered for comparative analysis. These levels are geographic/locational levels, non-locational demographic groups and aspects of education and society. This framework has since been extensively adopted for comparative research (Bray, Adamson & Mason, 2007, p.8). Following this framework, this study considers three levels for comparison. For the geographic/locational levels it considers Europe, specifically three countries: Sweden, Germany and France. For the non-locational demographic level it considers Syrian refugees. Finally, for the aspects of education and society, it focuses on two comparative mobile learning goals, which are learning a new language and taking a HED course.
Many comparative studies seem to be drawn to comparing places, but according to Bryman (2016), that does not always have to be the case. In the case of ML for Syrian refugees in Europe, a cross-national or a cross-cultural comparison does not seem to make a strong aspect. Mobile technology can be used from anywhere at anytime. For instance, two different refugees who speak the same language could access exactly the same application to learn a new language in two different European countries. Some applications even offer variations of initial language of learning, so a Farsi speaker and an Arabic speaker could both use the same application to learn German. The location in this case does not make a difference, especially within Europe. We could also argue that if a refugee intended to take a HED course taught in English from the university of Amsterdam for example, she could use the same MOOC to do so wherever she is. It is true that the infrastructure, laws and services that each country of asylum offers for refugees could vary and change the nature of what and how to learn. Still, these variations within Europe are not too extreme. The case will be different if we were comparing refugees in Europe and Africa for example. Additionally, refugees need language and further education to be able to integrated in their new society. They need language to communicate and further education to achieve certain jobs. These two things are usually top priorities for both, refugees and countries of asylum. So making these two educational goals the two comparatives of the study has the potential to identify results that are more sensitive to the research questions. Also, that will hopefully pinpoint the effects of different educational needs on agency and self-worth of refugees. This is why the comparison of two different ML goals is used for this study.

### 3.4 Research Method

The Research design that was discussed in the previous section guides ‘the execution of a research method’ (Bryman, 2016, p.40). Research methods are simply the techniques used in a research to collect data (Bryman, 2016, p.40). Due to the philosophical nature of this study and its qualitative strategy, the data collection method that stands to be more suitable is qualitative interviews. They take interest in the participants’ point of views and give freedom to the researcher to elaborate on certain answers and ask further questions on the spot (Bryman, 2016, p.466-467).
Interviews in general are the most widespread method in qualitative research. They are described to be a two-person conversation started by the interviewer. They allow more freedom for participants as they are verbal, but still focus on the objectives of the research (Cohen et al., 2007, p.351). For this study, interviews allow the researcher to collect data from the point of view of interviewees, which leads to a better understanding of their agency and their perception of their social context and educational experience. Also, to be more specific, the kind of qualitative interviews to be conducted in this study is semi-structured interviews. They are compatible with the researcher’s goal as they allow her to set up an interview guide derived from the research question and the theoretical framework of the study. Also, they allow space for asking further questions in case something sparked any interest during the process (Bryman, 2016, p.468). This could pave the way for deeper understanding of the philosophical and psychological understanding of refugees’ perception of their experience with ML.

3.5 Sampling

The quality of a research does not only rely on appropriate methodology and a correct use of instruments. It also depends on how suitable sampling and sampling strategies are for the study (Cohen et al., 2007, p.100). As this study adopts a generic inductive qualitative model, a generic purposive sampling deemed to be the most suitable sampling approach. It is also considered for this study on the basis of being fixed and priori. A fixed strategy of sampling means that the sample has been set at the beginning of the study with little or no addition to it throughout the research. As for a priori strategy, the criteria of selecting the sample is also set up at the beginning of the study with no changes made to it throughout the research (Bryman, 2016, p.410). According to Cohen et al. (2007) purposive sampling allows researchers to pick samples in which will have certain characteristics that are desirable for a satisfactory data collection process (p.114-115). This is particularly valid for the study as it discusses Syrian refugees in Europe who leveraged ML for learning a language or a HED course, which is a very specific group.
The sampling process for this study starts with setting a criterion of appropriate cases. First the context of the study is selected, which is on the regional level of Europe. Reasons why Europe is selected as a geographical setting will be explained in the next chapter. Based on these criteria, participants of this study need to be:
- Refugees.
- Syrian.
- Residing in Europe.
- Above the age of 18.
- Have already finished secondary education.
- Have used mobile learning for an appropriate amount of time.
- Have used it either to learn a language or to take a HED course.

The rationale for these criteria is derived from the research question. Working with regional context already makes the study broad to a certain point. Therefore, other elements of the criteria need to be very specific in order to narrow the scope of the study and fulfil the research questions. The rationale for selecting Syrian refugees above the age of 18 is also explained in the next chapter. As for the usage of ML for an appropriate amount of time, this needs to be highlighted as an important part of the criteria because students need to go through a learning experience for a period of time that is not less than 6 months to be able to have useful and constructive feedback on the topic. Any shorter period of time is deemed unacceptable for the researcher to make a rationale out of the experience. As mentioned in the previous section, the selection of language and HED courses is made depending on how essential these exercises are for adult refugees to adapt to the new social and practical contexts in their country of asylum.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

During the data collection process of this study, certain patterns start to appear while conducting the semi-structured interviews. This leads to considering that a qualitative thematic analysis would be the most suitable to analyse data. According to Bryman (2016) this kind of data analysis method is “not an approach
that has an identifiable heritage” (p.584). However, it has gained popularity among researchers and is now used as a distinct method. Recognising themes within data is something that already exists in other analysis methods and it is a process of building up groups of codes (Bryman, 2016, p.584). To analyse collected data in this study, a sit of notes are generated from the data by reading through the transcribed interviews over and over again. Then these notes are used to recognise certain patterns of initial codes. With constant review, the codes then are clustered into themes. The importance of themes in this study or in any study is its relationship to the research questions and whether if they serve the objectives of the research (Bryman, 2016, p. 586). So, the themes, which are identified within the collected data are presented as relevant concepts to the aims and objectives of the study. The consideration of themes for each comparative aspect of the study is looked at separately. This means that the codes of interviews with learners who leveraged ML to take a HED course are clustered into themes first. Then, the same process is repeated with data collected from interviews with learners who leveraged ML to learn a language. As for participants who used ML for both educational goals, their data is used twice, once for each comparative. Based on the interpretivist epistemology of the study, the recognised themes are qualitatively analysed for each comparative aspect separately. Then, findings from both comparatives are compared in terms of similarities and differences. After the analysis process, a discussion of findings is conducted based on the research questions and literature review. The discussion of findings will lead to concluding remarks about the research.

3.7 Quality Criteria

To insure the quality of any social research, including those of international and comparative education, certain quality criteria has to be implied. For quantitative research these criteria are 1) reliability, which is concerned with whether the results of the study are repeatable, 2) replication, which is replicating the findings of others, and 3) validity, which concerns the integrity of the a research conclusion (Bryman, 2016, p.41). There are also variations of these criteria like external reliability, which is to what degree a study could be replicated. Another one is internal reliability that should be applied in case of multiple researchers agreeing about what they witness.
There are also variations of validity, like external validity that relates to generalising findings across a social context. Also, internal validity, which is another criterion that is applicable in the case of multiple researchers and it is about the need of correspondence between researchers’ observations (Bryman, 2016, p.383-384). However, the relevance of these criteria to qualitative research has been questioned by researchers to the point that it was decided that these terms need to be adjusted to align with the nature of qualitative research. Bryman (2016) discusses alternative criteria for qualitative research first proposed by Lincoln & Guba (1985). The new primary criteria are trustworthiness and authenticity. In spite of ongoing discussions and criticism around them, these new criteria have been widely adopted by researchers (Gilgun, 2014, P.670-679).

Trustworthiness is made up of four criteria that each parallels one of the quantitative criteria. The first one is credibility, and it is the equivalent of internal validity. It entails sharing the findings with members of the social context in which the study takes place. This is to insure that the researcher’s interpretation of the participants’ experience is accurate and could be confirmed by them (Gilgun, 2014, p.280 & Bryman, 2016, p.384). While collecting data for this study, a general description of the research is explained to the respondents, it is explained to them that the interview is recorded and transcribed; then, those transcripts are made available for them to review and insure their validity.

The second criterion is transferability, and it is the equivalent of external validity. Since qualitative research closely studies a particular group and potentially produces detailed findings of this group, it is important to examine the possibility to transfer these findings to other groups to also facilitate a transfer of understanding. It is not about generalising the findings but more about producing ‘thick’ description of a certain context (Gilgun, 2014, p.280 & Bryman, 2016, p.384). The focus of this study on Syrian refugees residing particularly in Europe and who are particularly using mobile technology for education makes it very specific. Additionally looking at this context while considering self-worth of Syrian refugee learners from a Knatian perspective, gives the study a very specific scope. This has the potential to produce thick description of findings on these issues of a very specific group.
The third criteria is dependability, and it parallels reliability. It entails keeping an audit trail, which includes keeping record of all steps of the research (Bryman, 2016, p.384). While conducting this study, the researcher formulates the problem, creates the interview questions, selects the interview participants, transcripts the interviews and detects thematic patterns to perform data analysis in a transparent manner. All while keeping record of all the steps including audio recordings of the interviews and their written transcripts, in an edition to excel sheets used for data analysis. Everything is kept confidential and is electronically saved and protected by passwords.

Finally, the forth criteria is confirmability, and it is the equivalent of objectivity. It is about the researcher keeping objective and staying away from any preconceptions even while realising that complete objectivity is hard to achieve. This criterion allows the researcher to practise self-criticism while conducting a research (Gilgun, 2014, p.280 & Bryman, 2016, p.384). To ensure addressing this criteria, the researcher of this study follows a self-critical process throughout the research including always referring to the methodology of the study as a guide. The interview guide is audited in order to remain objective and not influence participants’ responses in any way.

In addition to insuring the criteria of trustworthiness, there is also the criteria of authenticity. It is an additional criteria in qualitative research that concerns the ‘broader political impact of the research’ (Bryman, 2016, p.386). This criteria includes fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity and tactical authenticity. This study aspires to meet all of these measures to insure authenticity. All different points of view are fairly considered while coding and analysing data. Additionally, the study endeavours to help members of society to have a better understanding of the current situation concerning Syrian refugees’ experience with ML, and motivates them to appreciate the perspectives of other members. In doing so, the study pursues ontological and educative authenticity. Moreover, it also aspires to implement catalytic and tactical authenticity in clarifying issues that could hold a better understanding of the usage of ML as a mean to
achieve self-worth through education. During the interviews, some participants point out that talking out loud about the philosophical dimensions of the experience of learning while living in exile and the challenges of learning through ML, has helped them to realise how important it was for them to take more action to enhance their situation.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Following the footsteps of applying quality criteria throughout this study, additional ethical considerations are accounted for to insure transparency and privacy of participants. The researcher takes decisions to implement certain practices to make sure that all participants are informed and comfortable with the experience. Before conducting interviews, a consent form is sent to each participant by email to read, sign and then send back to the researcher. The form is available in both English and Arabic, and both versions can be found in Appendix C. Moreover, a verbal summary of the study’s abstract is provided at the beginning of each interview. It proves to be a good icebreaker as well. It is also made clear that the interviews are recorded with the researcher as the only person who has access to the recorded audios. It is also described to them how would their input be used in the study and are assured that their names will not be mentioned. To keep the names of participants anonymous, codes are used instead of their names. The code SL is used for people who use ML to learn a language and the code SH is used for those who use ML to take HED courses, and SB for those who use both. A detailed guide for these codes is in Appendix B. Moreover, due to the sensitivity of the topic, participants are never pushed to answer any questions or forced to talk about their asylum trip. They are aware that they have the right to refuse answering any questions they are not comfortable with. They are also given the choice to ask any question to clarify any confusion they may have about the dynamic of the interview. Later on, the transcripts of the interviews are shared with them via email to insure credibility.
Chapter Four

4. Data Collection

This chapter presents details of the data collection process. It starts with reviewing the contextual background of choosing the sample including presenting the geographical setting of the study and selection of interview participants. It also draws details of how the interviews are conducted, and finally, how the data collection method is implemented.

4.1 Presentation of Sample

The next two sections introduce the regional setting of the study in addition to presenting the interviewees. They elaborate on how each of these geographic and social elements are chosen to build the sample of the study.

4.1.1 Regional setting

The choice of Europe as the geographical setting for this study has its significance. The largest numbers of refugees can be usually found in neighbouring countries to conflict zones. In spite of that, the influx of refugees to Europe seems to attract great attention. One reason for that is the political impact that the recent refugee influx to Europe has left on the EU. So, while refugees in Europe are provided with more assistance on the practical side, the issue of their personal and psychological wellbeing is alarming. The process of reaching Europe alone could be traumatising for refugees, and adds up to their already existing trauma. According to recent statistics by UNHCR 160,956 people have arrived to European shores in 2017 and an estimate of 3,049 people died or went missing during the trip in the same year (UNHCR, 2017d). Of course the numbers in 2015 and 2016 were higher. Syrian refugees make up one of the highest percentages of these newcomers.
The rise of far right political parties in Europe and the anti-refugee rhetoric that came with it has its own effect on refugees’ agency and self-worth. Also, even when many European communities came to be known as very welcoming to refugees, elements of cultural shock continue to play a role in affecting agency. In most cases Europe has a completely different cultural context for refugees who arrive from the Middle East, Asia or Africa. The need for refugees to adapt to this complicated context in addition to trying to understand the new job market as fast as possible generates a kind of distressing structure. According to Onsando & Billet (2017) social structures have an effect on agency; thus, in the case of refugees, distressing structures effect their ability to influence circumstances and control their actions (p. 337-338). Additionally, struggling to fit in or feeling less likely to compete in the job market or even experiencing discrimination on certain occasions, may stimulate a feeling of self-depreciation, which may interrupt taking control of one’s life (Onsando & Billet, 2017, p.344-345). All of this make Europe a suitable context for this study, as it is a place where these issues are raised.

4.1.2 Interview Participants

The interview participants of this study are adult Syrian refugees residing in Europe who leveraged ML for learning a language or taking a HED course. To collect a list of interviewees, multiple contacts from the researcher’s network were contacted. Due to working in the humanitarian and international education fields, the researcher has many contacts of professionals working in multiple UN agencies and NGOs. About 50 different emails were sent out with a description of the study seeking out for connections who fit the criteria. Unfortunately, the number of useful responses to these 50 emails was underwhelming. Many of these professionals did not have a direct contact with refugees or did not take their duties in Europe. Most of them provided contacts of Syrian volunteers or assistants working on the ground that turned out to be the real point of contact with refugees. Moreover, there was also the ethical element, as most of these professionals were not allowed to approach refugees with such matters. Another method to find participants was to post on Facebook groups for refugee students and spread the world among acquaintances.
who might know Syrian people who are residing in Europe as refugees. The problem was not in finding Syrian refugees in Europe, but finding those who used mobile technology for education. The study information sheet provided to contacts and potential participants is available in appendix D. Eventually, through using these 3 tracks of communications, the researcher managed to pile a list of participants as a sample for this study.

The final list of interviewee consists of 10 participants. 5 of them reside in Sweden, 3 in Germany and 2 in France. Out of the participants from Sweden 2 of them experienced using ML for language, 2 of them used it for HED courses and 1 did both. As for the participants from Germany 2 of them experienced taking HED courses using ML, and 1 did both. Finally the participants from France took one exercise each. All the participants vary in regards to gender, age and career fields. The youngest participant is 23 while the oldest one is 41. All of them have arrived to Europe after the recent war in Syria. One of the participants from Germany arrived there only 9 months ago. On the other hand, another participant from Sweden has been living there for 5 years and a half. The rest vary in between. As for their fields of study, they are also diverse between natural sciences and the humanities. Most of them arrived to Europe by taking the dangerous route across the Mediterranean, while 3 came legally. Also, 4 of them resided in another country of asylum (2 in Turkey, 1 in Jordan and 1 in Lebanon) before coming to Europe. Finally, it is important to mention a pattern that was noticed by the researcher while collecting data. Most of the participants who agreed to participate in the study are already on a certain level of education. All of them but 2 were comfortable enough with their level of English to conduct the entire interview in English. About 5 of them are studying for a second graduate or postgraduate degree.

4.2 Collection of Data

Following what was mentioned in the methodology chapter, this study’s qualitative data collection method is semi-structured interviews. Before conducting the interviews and during the procedure of finalising the study sample, the researcher
conducted short pilot interviews via phone or Skype with 12 participants to make sure that the participants truly fit the criteria. Many of the participants need more explanation of what ML actually is before deciding to participate in the study. This is useful in regards to creating the interview guide and help with creating clear questions. The pilot interviews are 10 to 15 minutes each. They are not transcribed and serve only the purpose of cross-referencing the participants’ experience to the sample criteria. After these interviews two participants are dropped from the sample, as their experience did not match the criteria. Their experience with using technology for education is merely filling in online scholarship applications, which is not enough to match the criteria. This makes the final number of interviewees into 10 participants.

All of the 10 participants are interviewed via Skype. The interviews are conducted in a private quiet atmosphere. They are also audio recorded using a smartphone application called ‘voice recorder’. They last between 40 minutes to 1 hour. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher explains the study’s idea and its general goals. She also explains that the interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed with an emphasis on ethical considerations like privacy and anonymity. The language of the interviews is mainly English, but the participants are given the choice to use a mix between English and Arabic or only Arabic. One interview is conducted entirely in Arabic from the beginning. No interpreter is needed as the researcher is fluent in both languages and has a professional experience in English-Arabic and Arabic-English interpretation. However, during the transcribing process, the quality of translation from Arabic audio to English transcript is double checked by another English/Arabic speaker to ensure quality.

The interview guide consists of 16 questions divided into 3 topics: 4 introductory questions, 7 questions pertaining to ML, 4 questions related to self-worth, and a concluding question asking the participant if he/she would like to add something. The interview guide can be found in Appendix A in both English and Arabic. It is used to interview all 10 participants regardless of what education goal they used ML for.
Chapter Five

5. Data Analysis and Study Findings

This Chapter views the analysis of data collected via the semi-structured interviews. The analysis is initiated by reading the transcribed data over and over again in order to recognise certain patterns. With constant review and note-taking, initial codes are recognised and entered into an excel sheet. The excel sheet is used for a more organised review. The codes are listed adjacently in the excel sheet in two columns considering the two comparatives, which are ML for HED and ML for language. The codes then are colour-coded and clustered into themes for each comparative aside. The themes resulted from the two comparatives are very similar, so they were unified into four main themes for the whole data. The codes are ML platforms, leveraging ML platforms, rebuilding practical identity and regaining self-worth. This chapter views these themes in regards to the comparative design of the study. They are first analysed separately within each comparative, then, the findings from the two educational goals are summarised comparatively. Finally, it is important to highlight that the analysis considers the participants’ point of view as the study’s interpretivist epistemology entails.

5.1 Mobile Learning for Higher Education

Seven of the semi-structured interview participants have experienced using ML to take a HED course. This section examines the 4 themes of the study analysis of data collected from these 7 participants. The first theme discusses the platforms and modules that refugees use to take higher education courses, how they work and how really effective they are. Then, the second theme examines what these platforms are being used for and how useful and significant they are to refugees’ educational goals, and whether they really hold the quality needed for sustainable outcome. Then the third theme looks at whether if, or how the use of ML to take those courses is helping
refugees to build new practical identities for themselves. Finally, the forth theme examines issues of value pertaining the experience of refugees and the effect of using ML for HED on their sense of self-worth.

5.1.1 Mobile Learning Platforms

Refugees find platforms for HED courses either voluntarily through searching for courses online and using the ones they see suitable for their needs, or through being guided by a university or an NGO. This is because there are multiple NGOs that help guiding refugees through their educational experience and provide advice and counselling. Two of the interview participants have applied for a programme led by Kiron Open Higher Education, which is a social startup based in Germany and has offices in France, Turkey and Jordan. Kiron accepts applications from refugees who wish to continue their HED but do not have a direct access to a university or HED institution. So, this NGO works with partner universities to provide refugees with preparatory courses as a first step to a university degree. It provides the students with access to online courses to either study specialised topics based on different fields or offer other types of courses like specialised languages, academic writing or research methodologies. If the refugee students were able to finish the first year of courses, they can move on to be enrolled in a university to complete the rest of their HED programme. Other than options like Kiron, Refugees can choose to apply for university programmes, which run completely online. Many universities around the world offer such programmes and provide the chance for students to apply for scholarships to cover their fees. One of the study participants who is enrolled in a two-year online master’s programme said that she needs to go to the university building which is in a nearby city to where she lives only twice a year for semester examinations. The other participant is enrolled in a full online university programme and does everything including examinations solely online. On the other hand, for refugees who decide to learn individually without being enrolled in a university or an NGO, there are plenty of accessible MOOCs they can find online on their own. In some cases, online universities use the same MOOCs that could be openly available online for everyone. Some of these MOOCs require payment, but they are usually affordable.
When it comes to the design of HED platforms used by refugees, they seem to have common features among them. As mentioned earlier, most platforms use MOOCs. The most popular MOOC platform used by different universities and partner NGOs is Coursera (www.coursera.org)\textsuperscript{14}. It is one of the most successful MOOC platforms in the world. It provides online courses created by esteemed universities around the world like Oxford, MIT and The University of Amsterdam among others. The courses are also prepared and taught by excellent lecturers and teachers. Coursera courses usually consist of 3 things: videos, resources and interactive communication means. The videos are usually categorised in segments with a certain subject demonstrated by a lecturer or a teacher discussing a certain topic. Most of them are in English, but there are occasionally subtitles either in English or another available language. This varies depending on the source of these courses. The videos are usually supported by interactive questions that either pop up in the middle of the video or at the end. Some platforms also provide the full script for these videos for reference. Other than the videos, students are usually provided with a list of literature suggestions and/or their sources. The videos and their enclosed list of references are usually structured in modules and put into a timetable to help manage the student’s flow of learning experience. At the end of each module, there is usually a quiz the students need to finish to be able to move to the next module in addition to an assignment. Then at the end of all modules, there is usually a final assignment. Moreover, Coursera courses provide interactive platforms like peer assignment review and discussion forums where students can write down their questions and be answered by either other students, volunteer instructors or professors depending on the course. Another popular HED online platform among participants is EdX (www.edx.org) which was founded by MIT and Harvard University. It is another MOOC provider that offers a course structure very similar to Coursera. Participants described it to have enjoyable lectures that are sometimes filmed outside of a classroom, which gives the feeling of watching a documentary on television. EdX also offers quizzes, resources and discussion platforms.

\textsuperscript{14} Coursera is a company that offers online courses, specialisations, and degrees in many subjects through working with universities and organisations (https://about.coursera.org/).
Other than MOOCs, participants mentioned other platforms to take a HED course like futurelearn.com, udemy.com, and saylor.org among others. Most of these online platforms follow the same structure mentioned before on different levels of quality. Some of them are specialised in a certain topic like coding and programming languages for IT specialists. On the other hand, some of them are not licensed by a certain university but offered individually by a specific professor or an expert. Most of the time these less intensive courses depend on video lectures more than other aspects and are used as an informal education option for students to strengthen their general knowledge about a certain topic. In general, most platforms mentioned earlier offer a certificate of completion for an affordable price. For those more expensive courses, some platforms offer financial aid opportunities where students can fill an application to ask for exemption from the course fees. It is basically like applying for a scholarship. So, with hard work and continuous follow up by completing assignments and quizzes, learners can gain an official certificate of a course provided by lead universities in the world. Furthermore, it is important to point out that participants found the method of providing videos and interactive environments to be an enjoyable learning method. One of the participants has experienced taking a course in a Swedish university where the platform did not offer video lectures. He said that it was hard to stay motivated when taking a course that is solely online but has no interactive element to it. The course basically depended on reading, written materials and following some links to further resources and then a final assignment.

“it was really hard to stay motivated, because there was zero human contact in the learning process, at least when you watch a lecturer there is a human being giving you the information, but reading and writing alone was somehow boring” (SB1).

When it comes to the usage of these platforms, most participants mentioned that it takes a lot of dedication to complete them, because the element of physical interaction with other learners is limited. This will be further discussed in the upcoming subsection. On the other hand, all participants used these platforms
everyday to complete their lectures and assignments, and mostly used their laptops and tablets to get access to the platforms.

5.1.2 Leveraging Mobile Platforms

Most of the study participants have started using ML after they became refugees. They found it to be a good way to initiate their learning experience as refugees as fast as possible. Participant SH3 who stayed in a refugee camp for 8 months said that exploring the possibility of taking online courses has occurred to him even before leaving the camp.

“The waiting periods for the asylum application decision can take a long time, but during that period you start realising that you need to learn more to be able to get a job later, but it is really hard to do that while you are still in the camp, so I started checking online options to win some time”. (SH3).

So one of the first benefits of using ML according to refugees is the time element. Since refugees go through a time consuming process of regulations and paperwork regarding every aspect of their daily life, it is usually a relief for them to have an option that they can choose to use immediately if they wanted to. Participant SH5 mentioned that all the HED programmes he was interested in where he lives in France were offered only in French. So he has to study the language very well for more than a year and pass an academic French language test to have a chance to apply for this programme. However, he did not want to wait for that long.

“I felt so uncomfortable with the fact that I needed to wait that long to be able to continue studying, I already finished 3 years of information science in Syria and I had to leave before I graduate and now I need to wait for two years only to go back to school and start over. I felt helpless and I needed to start working on myself, so using that online course was a good idea” (SH5).
Many other participants shared this concern about saving time. Some of them seemed to be eager to rebuild their lives as soon as possible and the language barrier was not helpful. It might take them many months to learn the language of their host country, but using this language for academic study requires even further time and effort. The opportunity provided by ML to take a course in English, which most of this study participants speak very well, was described by them as a great opportunity. Moreover, a lot of refugees work or at least have temporary or part-time jobs. The flexibility of ML allows them to learn whenever and wherever they are. Many participants described this as 'comfortable'.

“When you are dealing with the psychological issues of your new hard life, it is nice to be able to take a break for a day and not be forced to go to class…Sometimes I feel so bad, I cannot do anything, so it is good to rest for one day and then go back to studying the next day” (SH5).

“it is a big time saver, I do not need to commute to a physical class, I can control my own time, I can create my own base, I can take breaks if I am sick or tired and I do not need to be forced to attend a class against my will” (SH2)

The time and place element is also found to be important when it comes to course choices. As it is not easy for refugees to relocate due to legal and financial issues, ML allows them to study in a university that is not necessarily in their place of residence. Many of them said that it is less expensive and more convenient to take an online course instead of commuting to a university in a nearby city or even moving for that purpose. Furthermore, ML enables refugees to study courses that are provided by any university in the world while they are setting at home. Many of these universities are highly ranked and could offer a good quality of learning input.

As for learning purposes, participants had different reasons to use ML for HED courses. Some of them, like Kiron students, benefit from those courses to prepare for joining a university programme where they will be physically engaged in attending classes later on. Others were actually studying their 3-year long bachelor’s
programme online. As for others, taking different courses was seen as a tool to gain more knowledge in their field. Participant SH4 is an architect who is looking forward to do a master’s degree and be able to practise his profession in Germany where he lives. He said that online courses have become a huge important element for his academic development.

“For me as an architect, thanks to these courses I continue to keep up with very new ideas in my field.. I lately learned about Smart Cities which I found to be an amazing idea…these courses opened up my mind to the idea of the importance of urbanism so now I have many new interests and I am close to finding what I really like and have passion for” (SH4)

The up-to-date architecture courses he took, helped him to realise new trends in this field and helped him to understand the notion of interdisciplinary research in architecture. This, in his opinion will help him to pick the topic he wants to research next for his master’s degree. Also, it will also help him to get a job in a progressive German architecture job market. Another example of this could be drawn from the experience of two other participants who are informatics engineers. They both mentioned that they are in a rapidly developing field and to be able to have a career in this field, they need to be constantly updated on the latest innovations in programming, web development and IT in general. In this field “the academic experience could not possibly provide all the information an informatics engineer needs to develop a successful career. Learning online in this case is a need, especially when intending to learn things like programming languages” (SH1). Both of these participants have lived in Sweden for a few years and managed to finish their master’s degree in Uppsala University. They both managed to enter the job market lately and credited their success to all the effort they have put into leveraging online courses to further their knowledge in the field.

“I would have never been able to get a job in Sweden as a web developer without the online courses I have taken…I managed to take a course taught by a renowned professor that is simply my dream to attend one of his lecturers and also get a certificate for completing a course that I never
thought I will be able to take because it is extremely expensive in real life” (SH2).

So for already highly educated refugees, ML for HED offers opportunities for further knowledge that may help them to compete in the job market. Most of the time, these refugees with already good credentials are asked to complete certain courses to be able to take a certain position. However, this leads us to ask the question: how about refugees who are less educated and have perceived less education in the past or do not speak a foreign language? This could be a reason why many refugees would not be able to benefit from what ML has to offer for HED goals. Participant SB2 struggled with his experience with MOOCs and ended up quitting the courses because of his language skills.

“My English was not good enough for me to continue with these courses. I constantly fell behind and everything took extra effort…without any support or guidance from an education councillor or teacher, I was not able to continue this experience on my own” (SB2).

It is unlikely that any of the Syrian refugees in Europe speak English as a first language. The fact that these platforms are provided mostly in English leaves the majority of learners behind when it comes to HED in specific. Also, guidance is another issue that could make leveraging ML platforms for HED a challenging task for refugees. Many participants acknowledge the fact that they always felt like they needed human connection. Some were simply satisfied with the chat groups or discussion platforms that some MOOCs offered, but others insisted that this does not replace teachers. Some participants mentioned that this could also affect their levels of motivation and dedication towards the courses. “It feels lonely sometimes” (SH3).

Another topic that was repeated by many participants is the sustainability element of ML for HED. Some participants thought that ML cannot replace the real experience of attending an institution, but they realise that it provides solutions on the spot. However, many of them who are in certain fields were convinced that online courses are always a good way for career development and could be always used for
obtaining further credentials. When asked if they will use ML again for the same or for different educational goals, most participants were positive that they will do that again depending on their future needs.

5.1.3 Rebuilding Practical Identities

The element of heteronomous identity was very evident across the data collected from the semi-structured interviews. When refugees talked about their experience and especially the early stages of that experience, they expressed a sense of loss and vulnerability. Even when the intensity of the experience was not the same for all of them, they all expressed having felt completely lost at some point. Participant SB2 explained that when he first arrived to Germany, he instantly started to feel the pressure of what lies ahead.

“When you first arrive, you are on survival mode, you are in denial and just thinking that you made it…once you settle down you start feeling the pressure of what lies ahead…life in refugee camps is too overwhelming and there is no sense of freedom or privacy in it at all” (SB2).

This initial period of the refugee experience is when refugees start to submit to heteronomous identities. They spend their time following up on paperwork and talking to social workers while constantly waiting in queues for hours to do these things. Even after leaving camps and settling down in normal houses and flats, refugees maintain their heteronomous identities because they still feel that they do not have the freedom they had back home. The more time it takes for them to settle down, the more it affects them.

“First your ambition in life becomes to leave the camp, and when you do, you just wish to speak the language, and when you do, you start thinking about getting a job and building a social life and trying to be happy…it seems like what was normal before now it is a dream” (SH5).
All of the study participants expressed that persistence and patience are two of the very few options they had for dealing with such a painful experience. They looked at their problems and examined what could be fixable and used education as one of the solutions. Some of them mentioned that since refugees have no control of some issues like the waiting periods for their refugee status determination process, they try to take control of the things they can change themselves. However, this is a rugged road for them and sometimes takes years to be realised. Participants explained that it is never easy to find the motivation to seek education in these circumstances. However, the pressure of the idea of finding a job later and building a new life could be a very powerful motivation. Still, it is another thing that felt imposed on them, but by time it turned into a personal goal.

When it comes to HED, the main reason why refugees aspire to take more courses is to be able to enter the job market. They expressed the high importance of being able to get a job and earn a living. However, many of them said that it is not enough to find any job. Many refugees work, but the initial jobs they do are rarely within their field. For those interested in taking HED courses, they basically want to work on their credentials more than anything else. Participant SH3 who went through taking preparation courses using ML and went on to attending a university in Germany, said that it was a highly important experience for him. As a 23 year-old, he needed to get his bachelor’s degree in order to meet the expectations of the job market later. He is in his second year and already planning to do a master’s degree after.

“You need to have a master’s degree in my field to get a job later…I cannot work in a supermarket forever…I want to make sure that I have a chance after I graduate” (SH3).

Most participants stated that it was really hard to start learning again; it may take months or years for them to start the process. However, the extra responsibilities that they have towards rebuilding their lives mostly push them forward. Moreover, once they start studying again, it feels like they are actually doing something, instead of sitting around and feeling bad about the hardships of their reality. The experience of
being persistent with their educational experience and maintaining diligence throughout the process is hard work.

“it takes a lot of hard work to go through the experience of being a refugee and being a student is one of the things that sometimes add pressure...I had days when I wanted to quit and sometimes when I felt so down I thought: is it all worth it?...but I am really glad that I did not give up” (SH3).

Using ML provided them with tools to jump over practical obstacles and see themselves as able to create new identities of their own. Two of the study participants managed to get jobs in their own field as web developers thanks to the affordable and flexible online courses that reinforced their already existing academic knowledge. Also, in addition to knowledge and official certificates, ML can help refugees to be part of their field community again.

“these courses gave me knowledge to be part of a group of architects here in Berlin...now I can join their events and discuss topics that are relatable, especially about the architecture scene of the city so I can be more active in my own field” (SH4).

So using ML helped them to rebuild desired identities like being a member of a professional group or an employee in a certain company, or a student in a certain university. All of these practical identities were built through using ML platforms for HED courses. These refugees moved over from their heteronomous identities and created new practical identities for themselves through ML. Furthermore, this has potential to affect their future methods of learning and consequently their character development as well. When asked if the experience of using ML has made them ready to strive for further educational endeavours, most of them said yes. Many of them said that it gave them the keys to know what kind of topics they want to study further and gave them vision of their next step. So the experience for them also creates a good environment to pave the way for creating future practical identities.
5.1.4 Regaining Self-Worth

The refugee experience can leave its mark on refugees’ sense of self-worth for years. The study participants arrived to their country of asylum via different ways and experienced different circumstances. However, no matter how variant their experiences were, they all expressed enduring a sense of loss and vulnerability at some point. The main factor in this issue is the social factor as refugees find themselves in a strange society that is very different from what they used to have. This has a powerful impact on them when they realise that they are the strangers in this context. One of the participants stated that he never experienced the feeling of being a minority before; because where he comes from he is not. So, feeling like a minority in his country of asylum and realising that society and the law treat him differently grounded his feeling of exile even deeper. This is a common feeling among expats and immigrants, but for refugees it has a deeper impact on their agency because their situation is forced on them. Furthermore, the political impact of their existence in Europe as refugees makes them very sensitive to being treated differently. Many of them respect the law and realise why things can be legally complicated sometimes, but they also struggle with that feeling of being seen as strangers whether in a positive or negative context.

“It is always about ‘we’ and ‘them’...now I am a ‘them’ not a ‘we’ in Swedish society. So, fitting in becomes a life goal...it is very difficult because you are treated differently and also you are treating yourself differently, because you need to challenge your culture sometimes to compromise. Still, you will never be a real Swede and you no longer feel like a real Syrian as well” (SB1).

Many of them told stories about being extra checked in airports and by ticket inspectors in public transportations. They realise that they might be over sensitive about such issues. However, they always have this feeling in the back of their mind that some things might happen because they are refugees in a society where not everyone approve of them. On the other hand, this issue seems to be also very complicated for refugees who are aspiring for continuing their higher education. As
mentioned earlier, refugees who aspire to enter a certain job market that requires HED credentials have a long way to go. For many who already graduated and worked in their home country, both their credentials and previous work experience would not be considered for the same job in their country of asylum. They also may need higher credentials to compete in the labor market, because their expertise may not be relevant to the European context. This has a major impact on their sense of self-worth in their new community as they feel less appreciated than their peers in the field.

The new practical identities that the study participants managed to reconstruct via ML for HED helped them to regain a sense of self-worth and reshape their characters as agents. This is evident in many statements they made while talking about their experience.

“Without these online courses, I would not be working today…this acknowledgement that my CV is now worth it and I can compete in the job market made me feel so good about myself…when I finished my first course and got the certificate and put it on my Linked In profile, it felt so good and made me want to accomplish more” (SH2).

Other than standing a chance in the labour market, participants pointed out that being educated and knowledgeable made them look better in their social context. For them, they feel that refugees are always labelled to be less educated. So, by being more educated, they feel that this helps their image and even gives a good impression of Syrians in general. However, some participants said that they are really struggling with that idea, because it is awful that they need to prove that they are worthy of being treated equally. So, even when education did help them with their self-worth, they still had an existential issue about why they need to provide proof of their value.

“I feel like I will always have an issue with my self-worth because occasionally I will be patronised by others for being a refugee regardless
of my education, but at least I will be more resilient because my education
gave me faith in myself” (SH5).

On that note, it was noticed that the more participants have achieved through ML and other means of education, the more they felt better about themselves. So they credited a great importance to completing their higher education. Furthermore, the feeling of accomplishment and building new opportunities for themselves also provided them with self-worth.

“...I see other refugees around me who do not work or study.. they just sleep eat and breath.. they do nothing.. I just cannot live like this anymore. For me education fills my life…it is the feeling of being occupied all the time makes me feel good about myself. I am even incapable of doing nothing now, when I have free time, I just come up with things to do…it is a good feeling” (SH3).

So, the experience of being lifelong learners provides refugees with a sense of control over some aspects of their lives. Although many of the study participants said that there will always be struggles, but at least the opportunities that ML has provided for them to pursue their HED has changed many things in their favour.

5.2 Mobile Learning for Language

Five of the semi-structured interview participants have experienced using ML to learn a language. This section, as the one before it, examines the 4 themes of the study analysis of data collected from the five participants. The first theme discusses the platforms and modules that they use for language courses as described by the participants. Then, the second theme examines how these platforms are being used and how useful they are for language learning, and whether they really help to reach high levels of language proficiency. Then the third theme will look at how the use of ML in this context could help refugees to build new practical
identities. Finally, the forth theme will examine the possibility of regaining self-worth by learning the language of the asylum country through using ML.

5.2.1 Mobile Learning Platforms

Digital technology has definitely created new conditions for language learning in the past couple of decades. For refugees, the language barrier is the first thing they encounter when they first arrive to their country of asylum. It is hard to do anything without a common way to communicate with people. So, language is usually the first thing they attempt to learn. The study participants used 4 ways to learn a new language: mobile applications, online courses, online platforms provided by their language schools, and finally, using video chat to initiate conversations with native speakers.

The first platform that refugees usually dabble into is mobile phone applications. Many of these language learning applications have lately made it possible for Arabic speakers to learn English, German, Swedish and French. Applications like Duolingo, Memrise and Busuu have been very popular among refugees, mainly because they are free and entertaining. Duolingo depends on the gamification element and provides a fun learning experience. It trains writing, reading, listening and speaking skills. Learners can engage in answering questions, which depends on translation, dictation and voice recording. The study participants who used it said that it basically depends on memory and repetition. Its imagery is somewhat cartoonish which adds an element of ‘fun’ according to refugee learners. The Duolingo platform consists of a series of modules related to a certain topic or grammatical rule, and each module contains 3 to 10 lessons. The application also offers chat spaces for learners to practise with each other online. Most other language learning applications follow the same or a similar design.

The other kind of platforms described by participants was the the platforms offered by the government to support the language lessons that refugees already take at language schools. These online platforms are popular in Sweden and France more than Germany, but mostly in Sweden because it is part of the free Swedish
learning service provided by the Swedish government as part of its integration plan. Even when municipalities in Sweden offer most of these courses, there are other private ones. Refugees sometimes can get discounts or financial support to go through the paid option. However, the free and paid platforms are not very different according to participants. They mostly contain reading materials and links to other sources, they rarely have videos or audios and some of them are mostly used to upload assignments. Refugees described them as dry and hard to use.

“I tried Swedish language platforms like Hermod…they were not nice and hard to use…you cannot interact with an instructor or another learner…It is hard to use them for replacing physical classrooms because they need to be developed further” (SL2).

Although these platforms do exist to specifically work as a way to support already existing physical language classes, refugees expressed that it would be helpful if they were more interactive. When it comes to language, it is important for the learning experience to be entertaining for them, because learning a language is also about learning about the culture. Making these platforms more enjoyable provides refugees with a constructive experience. On the other hand, refugees in many countries have the option to apply for online language courses taught by universities. This option is not available to all refugees though and it requires an application for financial aid or exemption of fees. These courses are usually similar to the HED courses described previously. The course, as described by one of the study participants, depends on online interactive lessons. It is similar to a video conference where the teacher can see a list of names of students who are attending the lesson while it is being filmed and streamed. The students can click a button to indicate that they want to ask a question. The teacher sees that on the side of the screen and has the option to allow the student to talk. Everyone in this scenarios use headsets and microphones, so the lesson mimics a real classroom. The whole session is recorded and then downloaded on the platform for students to come back to it later if they wanted to. The platform also allows discussion sessions that help with group work assignments, and to also be used for submitting assignments and contacting teachers. Participants who tried this platform gave it a very good feedback.
Finally, one of the platforms that refugees can use to practise their speaking skills is video chat. There are websites or applications like TandemPartner www.tandempartners.org that allow refugees to find people who are interested in exchanging language skills. Participants who used this method said that they found people who were learning Arabic and ready to exchange language skills. They teach refugees German or French.. etc. and practise their Arabic in return. After using the TandemPartner for finding those people, then the language exchange meeting could be set up on Skype or any other video chat method.

5.2.2 Leveraging Mobile Platforms

When refugees first start experimenting with learning the new language, they usually start with phone applications. This is because these applications are available on their mobile phones. Most Syrian refugees own smart phones, and as discussed in the theoretical part of the study, they actually heavily rely on them. As mobile phone applications provide a game-like fun experience of learning, refugees start using them during their first few months in refugee camps. The waiting periods for transfers out of the camp and the refugee status determination process for asylum seekers could take a long time. Since not all asylum seekers get the chance to be enrolled in language courses before they legally become refugees, many of them turn to self-learning. These applications can provide a solution in this case. However, according to the study participants, even with a high level of commitment, these applications do not take the learners to an advanced level of proficiency. The online platforms and courses can be more useful in that regard. They provide intensive information and reading materials. In the end learning a language needs daily practice and repetition regardless of the learning method. So even when refugees are attending language lessons in a classroom, they still need an online platform to practise at home. The big advantage for refugees is mainly the mobility of these platforms, especially the ones accessible from a mobile phone. For refugees who work, it is very hard to attend 4-5 hours of language classes everyday, so an online alternative is perfect for them. They can practise anytime anywhere.
“Using that application became a daily activity for me because of the accessibility to information all the time...learning the language is a key to living with the new society and also to find a suitable job” (SL1).

Competing in the job market seems to be the biggest concern for refugees. It makes sense that refugees need to speak the language of their host country to be able to work. In the case of certain professions, a language certificate is required. So even when refugees know how to practise the language with their surroundings, they still need an academic certificate for certain jobs. So, refugees are demanded to continue learning the language for years in order to achieve a certain level. ML provides them with the timesaving flexible and affordable solutions for that. However, not all participants believed in the sustainability of this tool. Some of them said that using ML for learning a language is not enough simply because learning a language needs human connection. They said that the element of oral practice with classmates is highly important and that ML platforms do not always allow that. Others believe this, but they also think that a learner could practise speaking anywhere, but when it comes to studying the material, ML is a perfect solution. Furthermore, other refugees said that after trying to learn a language online, they are ready now to try learning other things using ML as well.

The participants opinions of the language learning courses provided by the government of their country of asylum was variant. The three countries where the participants of this study live have different styles of teaching the language to newcomers. Although, some of them were described to be more successful than others, all of these countries provide language lessons as part of their integration plan. This in itself is very debatable, as many refugees criticise the way host countries have been implying integration. Regardless of criticism related to the cultural nature of integration programs, the language classes are usually problematic. Many of the study participants said that some of the teachers, who are mostly volunteers, do not always treat refugees appropriately. Many described language classes as crowded and uncomfortable. The students themselves are sometimes really hard to deal with, and they are usually very diverse, which could be problematic instead of exciting for some teachers. So, many refugees prefer the ML
“Using online courses saved me as I was slowly becoming opposed to the idea of attending the language classes. I did not enjoy them at all…my teacher was racist and struggled to control the class…but when I started depending on online courses alongside the class, I started to benefit more because I was at least understanding and enjoying learning more than before” (SB2).

Nevertheless, refugees described the platforms currently available for everyone to practise a new language as disappointing. Refugees question the quality of those platforms, especially those offered by integration programs. They are still very basic and hard to use. ML itself can still help somehow because when it comes to language, they could always find online resources to read, listen to or watch, but nothing of a high quality is available for more advanced levels of language proficiency.

“At some point you have to go back to pen and paper because what is offered online is not enough…I found some useful websites or university language courses but they usually require money” (SL3).

Also, the availability of online materials outside of what local integration programs and local universities provide depends on the widespread of the language itself. It is easier to find sources for French than Swedish for example, as French is much more widespread in the world. It is spoken by many countries as an official language and as a second language by a lot of people, so there are naturally more online resources for French language learners. Meanwhile, Swedish is only spoken in Sweden and only useful for people who live in Sweden, so the online resources for learning Swedish are very limited.
5.2.3 Rebuilding Practical Identities

The element of heteronomous identities is also very evident in the data collected from interviews with participants who used ML to learn a language. In this regard, the experience of refugees in general regardless of their needs is one. The trauma of their experience and then all the rules imposed on them strip them away from their free will and make them submit to heteronomous identities. The five refugees interviewed for this section of the study have also experienced feelings of complete loss and vulnerability.

“It took me 5 months to get from Turkey to France…I got stuck in Greece because my money was stolen and could not pay the smugglers anymore, and then I was detained in Macedonia for over a month, then I got dangerously injured while crossing the Hungarian borders to Austria, and when I finally arrived to France, they forced me to stay in a camp across the country from where my family lived and it seemed to me like another prison…it took me more than a year to start learning the language because I just could not do anything, I was too traumatised” (SL3).

These issues are more than common among refugees. The next step for them is extremely challenging. It is a series of paperwork, interviews and constant waiting. Some refugees have to wait for a long time only for their refugee application to be accepted. Also, for those who left their families behind, it may take years for their reunification applications to be approved. Some countries even stopped allowing family reunifications to control the number of refugees.

When it comes to language, it is the first thing that makes refugees feel vulnerable. Learning a language is never easy, especially for the older generation of refugees. However, learning the language seems to be imposed on them. They have no choice but to make an effort to learn or they may compromise their chances of blending in and finding jobs. Also, because of the language element, many refugees do not integrate in their new society. They prefer to spend time with people who speak their language who are most likely to be also other refugees and completely isolate...
themselves from their host community. However, when refugees do so, they are usually taking the easy way, but they often express that they would like to be able to fit in. Language can bring them few steps closer to achieving this wish.

“After I learned the language, I was able to establish better relationships with my neighbours. Some of them were excited that I am trying to speak their language and even offered to help me to practise” (SB2).

“I made a toast at a gathering last Easter, I did the whole thing in Swedish.. it felt great to be standing in front of native speakers and feeling confident to do that toast” (SL1)

The participants stated that learning the language made them feel stronger as they could manage many daily errands on their own and also be part of social events if they wanted to. They did not need someone to translate every single word or conversation for them. Also, it became easier for them to do things like shopping, renting a house, talking to social workers or finding part-time jobs. However, finding a stable job seemed to be their highest concern. Many of them need a certain level of language proficiency to enter the job market they desire. This could take years of practice and very hard work to achieve certain levels of writing, reading and speaking skills. In some places like France, even refugees’ academic options are very limited if they do not speak the language. On the other hand, many refugees saw that in certain fields of study, it is important to know a good level of English as well. One participant, who has been living in Sweden for more than 5 years, started taking English courses after learning Swedish. She said that she found an excellent master’s programme taught in English in a Swedish university and now she is taking online English lessons to enhance her English writing and reading skills.

For refugees who came this far, the outcome of their hard work helped them to rebuild new practical identities for themselves. Using ML provided them with the tools to see themselves as able to create new identities of their own. They are a few steps closer to be members of their local community, to achieve their job goals and to be more independent.
“learning the language made me more qualified to compete in the job market, especially in my field…mastering languages is very important and I feel that using technology to do it made me more tech savvy so it added to my opportunities” (SL2).

So for many refugees, learning the language is the start of their learning experience, but it is something that will continue for years depending on their needs. On the other hand, some refugees think that mastering the language is still not enough.

“it is only the first step…in order to get a job you need connections. This is how it goes in Europe. Of course that also comes after achieving acceptable credentials depending on your field” (SL1).

“being able to speak the language does not mean that you will magically fit in, that is really hard to achieve, but at least it will give you more chances to have a sense of community if you wanted to” (SB1).

Participants stated that regardless of other obstacles, learning the language is the ground base of their learning journey. Using ML helped them to rebuild their practical identities. They felt closer to being members of society than they did when they could not speak the language. It also paved the way for them to aspire for a wider range of jobs and universities. ML was a mean for them to step away from their heteronomous identities and create new practical identities. Many of them said that they would consider using ML to learn other things. This means that their experience may have even affected the way they shape their future practical identities.

5.2.4 Regaining Self-Worth

The loss of free will in many circumstances of refugees’ life and the effect of the heteronomous identities imposed on them can effectively harm their sense of self-worth. It was discussed before in this study that for refugees and especially during their asylum seeker period, the most vulnerable position for them is the feeling of being strangers to a new society. For refugees who do not speak the language this
issue is even more prominent. Some of the study participants mentioned that in certain communities in their country of asylum, they were treated badly because they did not speak the language.

“not all people are understanding of how much time and effort it takes to learn the language…when I struggled with speaking the language a year ago, I got a lot of looks and frowns from salesmen or saleswomen…even some municipality workers would lecture me about the need to learn the language…at that point I was able to understand them but could not answer, it was very dehumanising.. I felt awful and hated my refugee experience because of it” (SB2).

So when it comes to language, before thinking of university applications or the job market, it is the social factor that is mostly related to issues of self-worth for refugees. They feel vulnerable when they are treated badly or when they struggle with finding services or running errand without someone to help them. The idea of experiencing new things on a daily basis could be unsettling for many people. On the other hand, some participants said that they felt very welcome in their country of asylum and chose to ignore people who mistreat them because they realised that these are individual acts and do not represent the majority of the country. However, being able to communicate with members of the host society and trying to build relationships with them is always an eye opening experience for refugees. They get to learn more and share their culture.

“the experience of learning about these people and talking to them in their own language and attending their events has influenced the way I deal with myself and the world around me…I need new tools to communicate and this pushed me to learn…and I felt like I am discovering new things about myself” (SL3).

The learning opportunity that ML has provided, although limited, has helped participants to build more practical identities and overcome issues of self-worth in some aspects of their lives. Learning the language is definitely one of the huge
obstacles that refugees face in their journey. However, it maintains a huge importance in their development.

“when I first arrived to Sweden I started reevaluating myself and thinking about how much do I worth in this new country…I knew I had potential like many other Syrians, but the problem with them is that they are not moving on with their lives…I did struggle like them, but I decided to move on and the more I learn, the more I feel this way” (SL1).

It was evident from the data collected from participants that putting effort into building their new identities was very difficult for them. However, they felt better about it later as the idea of overcoming obstacles itself gave them a sense of self-esteem and self-worth. For others, regaining self-worth is also about rebuilding character and consciousness.

“believe it or not, and I cannot believe I am saying this, but my refugee experience actually made me a better person...feeling how hard life is gave me respect of the human experience...because before the war, I was still in my early 20s and my parents shielded me from a lot of difficulties...but doing this on my own helped me to grow up...I prefer to think about it this way” (SL2).

This hard work towards building their autonomous identities through learning the language also needs the element of time. As a general note from the data, it was noticed that the longer refugees spend in their countries of asylum learning and rebuilding new lives, the more they were able to regain self-worth. When asked about her sense of self-worth, one of the participants said that after living in her country of asylum for few years, she does not feel that she has an issue with her sense of value and self-worth anymore.

- SL2: I do not really feel like I have an issue with my self-worth.
- The researcher: Does this have to do with the fact that you have been in Sweden for more than 5 years?
- SL2: Of course! if you asked me these questions few years ago, my answers would have been completely different.

This is specially evident in the case of learning the language of the host community. However, it is noticed across the data from both comparatives as well. After all, time is a very important element especially in the case of refugees as they slowly build their lives from nothing.

### 5.3 Comparative Summary

Overall, this chapter provided a comprehensive preview of the study findings and analysis derived from the data collected from participants through semi-structured interviews. The 4 themes of the analysis were separately discussed for each comparative. Many similarities and a few differences were noticed between the findings from the two comparative education goals.

ML platforms available for refugees are different between the two comparatives. HED platforms depend more on MOOCs and use video lectures in addition to discussion spaces for learners’ interaction. The most commonly used language platforms seem to be less advanced in the context of refugees needs. The language learning applications make a good choice but cannot take learners to highly advanced levels. However, the alternatives, which are mostly platforms provided by governments as part of their integration plans are not as exciting for learners to go through. They are criticised for being limited, dry and hard to use. As for the use of these platforms, in both comparatives, refugees appreciate the element of flexibility that ML enables them to have. They can use ML to learn anytime anywhere, which allows them to balance their own daily timetable. The affordability of ML is another point that was highlighted by participants. Most learning platforms for both educational goals could be free, affordable or paid for by a third party like a scholarship or a grant. Furthermore, these platforms were useful for both educational goals in regards to refugees’ initial period in their country of asylum. ML helps learners to start exploring opportunities for education from the minute they arrive
using their mobile phones and the Internet. However, this seems to be useful for language learning more than HED, because learning the language comes first on the list of priorities during the initial period. However, ML tools for HED had a huge disadvantage, which is its availability mostly in English. This left out all refugees who do not have the needed English language skills to leverage these tools.

According to the findings, the main concern for all refugees is building the ability to strongly enter the job market. Language is definitely a priority in this case, as refugees can rarely find jobs that do not require language skills. As for HED, it is also very important for many refugees, but it also depends on what kind of jobs they aspire to. The ML option provides HED courses on the academic level. However, there could be other levels like technical training and career development classes. So, it is fair to say that in the labor market language comes first for most refugees. However, the ML language platforms currently available for refugees seem to be less advanced than what refugees hope for. On the other hand, using ML for both educational goals has commonly provided refugees with skills that helped them with their social surroundings. Acquiring linguistic and academic skills gave them more independence and the tendency to socialise within social groups of their choice. However, it was clear that ML or education in general does not resolve every social issue refugees suffer from, but it helps in some cases.

As for issues of identity and value, all the study participants experienced feelings of loss and vulnerability. They were all subject to heteronomous identities being imposed on them over their autonomy and efficacy. The use of ML as a tool for education did help them to rebuild their practical identities but on different levels. Most of them stated that although many of their problems and anxieties remain prominent in their daily life, education still has a positive effect on some aspects of their life. In both comparatives the rebuilding of some of the participants’ practical identities has consequently provided them with a sense of control over their free will and they felt valued in their context and within themselves. However, there is a certain spectrum to their self-worth. Some refugees acknowledge that they value themselves with certain aspects of their lives. However, they still need more
character development as they realise that it requires hard work for them to regain a huge chunk of their self-worth.

In general, the experience of developing character and achieving self-worth for all participants was the same across comparatives. However, the difference between these comparatives was related to the quality and sustainability of the ML platforms used for Language and HED. This is important because the quality of these tools affects the impact of ML on refugees and consequently affects its impact of rebuilding practical identities and restructuring self-worth. This is to be discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter Six

6. Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

This chapter discusses the findings of the study derived from the thematic analysis conducted in the previous chapter. It will start by discussing the research questions and then elaborates on further discussions derived from the study results as well.

6.1 Discussion Based on Research Questions

This section is dedicated to discussing the study findings based on the research questions, which are:

1. What are the Mobile Learning platforms that Syrian refugees in Europe are currently using and what are the solutions they provide?

2. Could Mobile Learning be a mean for Syrian refugees in Europe to achieve a sense of self-worth in a Kantian sense and how?

It aims to answer those questions and elaborate further taking into consideration the theoretical background of the study to draw conclusions accordingly. To answer the research questions, the next two subsections elaborate on the study results related to ML platforms and the solutions they provide. After that, the two subsections discuss the relation between ML and regaining self-worth from the Kantian sense.

6.1.1 Platforms and Solutions

The findings of the study explored ML platforms used by Syrian refugees in Europe. However, these platforms seem to be limited. Most of the study participants
used the same platforms within each of the two educational goals, which this study focused on. The platforms available for HED and language were different. However, they were viewed to be limited in both cases.

Refugees’ access to HED is extremely restrained as only about 1% of refugees in the world are enrolled in higher education programs. This is because despite its importance, it is never given the priority by host governments or even refugees themselves. So it is not very surprising that the platforms available for Syrian refugees for HED are somehow limited. The current most efficient platforms are online universities and online courses (mostly MOOCs). These platforms can provide four main solutions, and they are:
1. additional knowledge as part of the informal dimension of refugees’ lifelong learning experience.
2. individual courses with a certificate of completion that could be very helpful to add to their CV.
3. preparation courses for physically attending a university later, like the type of courses that Kiron Open Education provides.
4. studying a complete degree for multiple years solely online.

These solutions are very effective and require a tremendous amount of dedication and hard work, which many refugees possess. Finishing these courses successfully helps refugees to develop their credentials and their overall knowledge of a certain topic. The study also showed that using ML to acquire more knowledge via these courses has helped refugees in their social context. They gained the confidence to socialise, especially with fellow colleagues in their field, which lead to building connections. On the other hand, when it comes to accessibility, the online courses are more accessible then university courses. This is mainly because university courses require an official application process and also a scholarship application process. Online universities and universities that offer online programmes are not free of charge. As for the other platform, which is online courses, they are most of the time easy accessible and free. Most of these platforms offer MOOCs, and they usually depend on curricula that are designed and presented by universities around the world. The most popular platform in that regard was found to be Coursera, which
offers courses presented by renowned universities and mostly for free. However, for students to be able to have a certificate of course completion, they have to pay. It is mostly affordable, but there is a possibility for students to apply for financial aid to be exempted from paying the certificate fees. Big platforms like Coursera usually cooperate with NGOs and scholarship programmes to provide opportunities for vulnerable groups like refugees.

These two kinds of platforms provide excellent solutions for refugees seeking HED. However, they are not inclusive enough to cover the majority of the Syrian refugee population in Europe. The main reason for that is the language element. Most of these courses are available in English, and they require a very good level of English proficiency. This already excludes a large group of refugees who do not speak the language. Some courses, especially those offered in universities of their country of asylum can be in other languages like French, German or Swedish. However, they also require an acceptable academic level of language proficiency, which takes years for refugees to learn. Another issue is the completion rate of online courses. In general, it is usually one of the biggest challenges for online courses. This is problematic for refugees who are taking an online course on their own outside the structure of a university system. They may fall behind or lose their motivation in the face of all the material and moral hardship of their refugee experience. As this study will continue discussing further, the ML experience requires hard work especially for individual learners.

As for language learning, there are four different possible platforms for refugee learners. The first one is mobile applications, which are usually interactive game-based platforms. Most of them could be accessible from mobile phones, tablets or laptops and they require Internet connection. The second kind is the online platforms provided by the asylum country’s governmental integration programme as a supporting platform for physical language classes. The third platform is academic university courses, and the final platform is language exchange conversations with native speakers via Skype or other communication platforms. These four platforms allow refugees to develop different levels of language skills and they can all be used at the same time.
The game-based mobile applications are a popular choice. They usually use the element of ramification to attract attention and provide an entertaining start for learners. This could be very helpful for beginners but it is not enough for higher levels. As for the video chat option for developing levels of speaking, it could be used for all levels. On the other hand, the option of university courses might hold the highest quality among the options provided for refugees. However, they are usually not free and require money or a scholarship. This leaves us with a wildly used option which is the platforms provided by the government’s language courses in countries of asylum. Most countries in Europe offer free language classes for refugees and some governments like Sweden offer follow up online platforms for refugees to use alongside their classes. However, these platforms are criticised for lacking the needed quality to be actively useful for refugees. Speaking the language of their asylum country is highly important for refugees. It makes them independent on some level and allows them to make contact with people around them in addition to having better changes at finding a job. However, these platforms are all not satisfactory for refugees. They are too scattered when it comes to the type of service they provide. Also, there is the quality issue. The study participants have expressed their disappointment in the online platforms provided by their asylum governments. They stated that these platforms could be highly important if they were developed to provide interactive and sufficient content.

6.1.2 Regarding Self-Worth

The clear effect of ML on refugees’ self-worth is more evident in the case of learners of HED than learners of language. This could go back to the fact that achieving HED is indeed a bigger achievement than learning the language. This is because more people learn the language than those who manage to finish their HED. This gives HED students and graduates more freedom to autonomously and efficaciously take actions and create opportunities for themselves like seeking a job in their field of interest. Another reason could also be drawn back to the quality issue of the available language platforms, which obstructs their efficiency. Nevertheless, the findings of the study hold evidence of positive effects of ML from both
comparatives regardless of their scale. By lining up the findings adjacently with the literature review of Korsgaard’s philosophy, we get a roadmap of refugees’ experience with education and their sense of self-worth.

The findings mark a strange start of refugees’ relationship with education. It seems that the need to get further education and learn the language is a need that is imposed on them like a heteronomous identity. However, for many refugees, education turns into a powerful incentive as they reason with its significance. The choice of using ML for education is for many the first step into acknowledging the need for education as a positive incentive and acting upon it. Stepping out of heteronomous identities requires hard work, and the choice to use ML for education is a very powerful way to do so. Most of the time, refugees arrive to Europe after experiencing dangerous and horrifying circumstances. The element of their wellbeing in this case poses a huge challenge for them to adapt with the stressful experience of asylum. This is a big dilemma for the constitution of their agency because it suggests a crumbling of their practical identities. Most things that they freely considered themselves to be are now replaced with the identity of a refugee who has no choice of where to live or what to work or how to see loved ones. Their practical identities are replaced one by one with imposed heteronomous identities. Their newfound legal and social struggles in addition to their previous trauma only add up to the problem. In this case, what refugees need the most is something to rebuild some of their practical identities in order for them to confer value to their agency, which leads to self-worth. As the need for education may start as one of those imposed circumstances at first, it soon becomes a positive mean to regain self-worth.

The study findings provide qualitative evidence that it is possible for ML to be a mean for Syrian refugees in Europe to achieve a sense of self-worth in a Kantian sense. The fact that most of the platforms seen in the study require self-learning, proves the amount of hard work and dedication that needs to be invested in them. By autonomously and efficaciously taking the action of going through this education experience, refugees start to confer value to their agency and rebuild their practical identities. Then, they start to practise these identities by better engaging in their social context, which leads them to understand it better. Once they start to act
autonomously, they soon succeed in taking more of their acts to their ends and show efficacy in their actions as well. This is how they start stepping away from their heteronomous identities one by one and build new practical identities. The data collected from the study participants demonstrated that taking more and more positively valuable actions through the course of months and years builds up a feeling of self-worth. This flow is, of course, not to go uninterrupted, builds up with time and maintains self-worth. There is no solution to revive an absolute feeling of self-worth, as the cycle of actions, building our character, practicing our identities and constituting our agency is unending. It is constant work, and it needs time to build up. The longer refugees spend in their country of asylum, the more time they have to add to their experience. Spending years and years of rebuilding the foundation of their practical lives and their agency alike, would mostly contribute to regaining their sense of self-worth. ML is only one of the tools that could be leveraged in education to provide refugees with solutions to allow them to take control over some aspects of their lives. However, this is conditional to the quality and sustainability of the available ML platforms and refugees' commitment to their educational experience in addition to the element of time.

6.2 Further Discussion

This section provides further discussion and reflection on the findings of the study and its theoretical framework. It mainly raises issues regarding ML quality and implementation in regards to refugee learners and how that could affect rebuilding agency. Also, it views another approach to leveraging ML for self-worth.

6.2.1 Quality Issues

It became evident from the research analysis that it is important to survey the ML platforms available to Syrian refugees in order to examine their quality. This is because if these platforms did not hold a good quality, they cannot enrich the educational experience of refugees and therefore will not be useful in rebuilding practical identities. The findings suggest that participants who used ML for HED were
more satisfied with their experience than those who leveraged technology for learning a language. This has something to do with the quality of the platforms. The real issue with language learning platforms for refugees is that they lack quality. These are usually the platform provided as part of governmental efforts for integrating refugees, and language lessons are always part of these plans in most European countries. Of course, these platforms are not the only available ones, but they are the most widespread among refugees. This is because engaging in these integration/language lessons is one of the main activities for refugees, so they should be valuable sources for learners. The reason why these platforms do not hold high standards of quality relates back to national policies. Some of these countries have been using the same platforms for years and have done little to revamp them lately. However, even if they did have plans to develop these platforms, the sudden and heavy influx of refugees in the past 5 years has definitely had a paralysing factor on related national institutions. In Sweden for example, the population grew by more than 140,000 people mainly because of immigration (Sweden.se, 2017). It is a huge challenge for these countries to keep up. Therefore, it is unlikely to expect for these platforms to be drastically changed anytime soon. Whereas, if we look at the HED platforms that were discussed in this study, we find that they were favourable for refugees. This again goes back to their source. They are mostly designed and presented by universities, NGOs or companies. This makes a huge different to the quality of their content.

If we think that the national efforts for developing language online platforms will not get better anytime soon, so a possible solution for the future might be mobile applications. So far, mobile applications for language learning, which are mostly usable via tablets and laptops, are providing good quality. However, their problem is that they are limited to a certain level of proficiency. However, a future possible application with higher levels could be a solution. Still, this is also unlikely to happen, simply because these apps are always designed for beginners. They target every single person on earth who wants to learn a certain language and provides a fun way to start ahead with learning the basics. What we need, on the other hand, is a similar high quality platform designed specifically for refugees. This of course requires funding and stakeholders who are ready to invest. There are currently many efforts
by UN agencies and NGOs to work in partnerships with giant companies like Google and Microsoft to leverage ML for refugee education (UNESCO, 2017b, p.41). Still, these projects are somewhat scattered and specific to certain geographical areas. They do not usually provide sustainable platforms as their efforts most of the time end with the end of the projects. However, efforts continue to grow in that regard as the number of ML based projects for refugees is on the rise (UNESCO, 2017b). Hopefully, this will lead to further sustainable use of ML in situations of emergencies and crises.

6.2.2 Supporting Self-Worth

This study discussed how ML can be leveraged as an educational mean to regain self-worth. The findings showcased how acquiring education through ML platforms can help refugees to achieve more and confer value to their actions. The focus was basically on receiving HED and learning a language. However, many other ML platforms could directly be used specifically for the purpose of healing and identity development. These platforms can provide this through a lifelong learning experience.

In fact even when refugees are empowered by education to regain control of their lives and reconstruct their self-worth, there are still many complications effecting their agency. While it depends on individual experiences and the country of asylum, many refugees continue to face hardship six or seven years after their arrival. Refugees may continue to struggle with the job market and society for several years. Some ML platforms could be used to deal with these issues by using storytelling. Multiple relief programmes have been using digital storytelling as a tool for healing and rebuilding communities. Most of digital storytelling platforms depend on videos, photographs and texts. Qisetna: Talking Syria (https://talkingsyria.com/) is one of these platforms. It is a social and cultural project aiming to share stories of Syrian people in their own words. Those Syrians reside all around the world, and they share their experience, memories and heritage with other Syrians and the world. This has the potential to provide a healing informal lifelong learning opportunities for Syrians in
addition to the people of their asylum countries. This dynamic of sharing stories and knowledge could help bridging social relationships between refugees and their new social context, which could contribute to their identity development. This is another potential use of ML to rebuild practical identities and reagin self-worth from a Kantian sense.

### 6.2.3 Education, Trauma and The Identity Crisis

In addition to discussing the research aims and questions, the study analysis revealed important findings related to refugees’ experience with education. The productivity of refugees and their attempt to rebuild their lives was noticed to be hindered by previous trauma and struggles with identity. As much as education was evident to help the participants of this study to regain some of their practical identities, it did not put an end to their struggle. Education in general and ML in particular was a way to solve practical issues like getting a job or following a certain academic path or even interacting with society. However, all participants portrayed continuous struggle with realising an absolute sense of belonging in their country of asylum. This consequently continued to affect their self-worth in many aspects of their life. It is very important to acknowledge that refugees experience the same pattern of resettlement at different stages in their lives. It is easier for refugees under or above a certain age to to engage in education again in order to build needed skills for the job market or for purposes of integration. However, the experience of going back to being students could be challenging for many refugees due to elements of age, health or psychological wellbeing. This is why the relationship between refugees’ wellbeing and education is interchangeable. As much as refugees could benefit from learning, their trauma or sense of lost identity could cause their educational experience to stumble. At the same time, providing them with quality education that considers their needs could help them to overcome struggles.

Education has the potential to empower refugees either by supporting their agency like this study has explored or by providing them with enough knowledge to develop their own conception of their context. They are usually stuck with
circumstances that are imposed on them, like the fact that their country is being destroyed or that they cannot go back or that they have loved ones living in a war zone. These are issues that they have no control over, but they need to learn how to deal with. So, giving them the option to take control of other aspects of their lives through education could be very empowering. It gives them the feeling that at least they are in control of something. This is an extended idea of turning their heteronomous identities into autonomous ones. Education cannot solve all their problems and may not provide them with the added value they need to embrace their reality or figure out their identity as individual beings. However, it partially gives them control to better understand their reality and create practical solutions for their daily life concerns like work and community. On the other hand, the educational opportunities provided for them need to withstand a certain level of quality that considers their needs and wellbeing. This puts a huge responsibility on educators and policy makers to continue addressing challenges and providing suitable learning platforms for refugees.

6.3 Conclusion

Reverting back to the aims and objectives of this study, the starting point of it was to examine the ability of Mobile Learning to provide a sense of self-worth to Syrian refugees in Europe. To look at the idea of self-worth, the study needed to adopt a certain philosophy. After deciding on the Kantian perspective, the work of contemporary philosopher Christine Korsgaard was considered due to her pioneering analysis of Kant's work. Following the objectives, the study identified the key concepts of situations of emergencies and crises and shed the light on the Syrian refugee crisis. Then it introduced a comprehensive idea of what ML is and tied these two subjects to the philosophy of Korsgaard. After conducting a qualitative study based on the theoretical background of the thesis, and discussing the findings, we can finally draw some conclusions and create the outcome theories.

There are currently limited ML platforms available to Syrian refugees in Europe. However, the current platforms seem to be delivering acceptable solutions
once they are leveraged successfully. The HED platforms proved to be more efficient for refugees than the language platforms. This could be related to quality issues and lack of sustainability which could compromise the effect of the ML tools. The study was done based on data collected from semi-structured interview with participants who are already highly educated. This could go back to the reason that ML is already reaching people on a certain level of education and leaving many behind. This is of course within the scope of Syrian refugees in Europe.

There is a relationship between regaining self-worth and education using ML as a mean. There is indeed a positive effect of achieving educational goals through ML on refugees’ agency. As theorised in the theoretical framework of the study, ML helped refugees to take autonomous and efficacious actions and confer value to them. This leads to rebuilding practical identities and regain self-worth. However, ML is yet to reach its fullest potential. This could be fulfilled by investing more academic and practical work into the field for better understanding and application. Finally, interdisciplinary studies like this one could be found very useful to examine the humanistic dimensions of using technology for education, which also leads to better future development in the field.

6.4 Looking Forward

The field of mobile learning still has a long way to go. We need to reflect on the challenges facing educational needs around the world and the potentiality of ML to provide suitable solutions. On the other hand, we need to reflect on our usage of digital technology in education nowadays and identify points of strength and weakness for reflection and future development. It is also important to address ML from a humanistic and cultural perspective and encourage leveraging ML for studying the humanities as much as natural sciences.

As for this study, it would be interesting to use it as a pilot study for further research concerned with ML and self-worth. This could be done by reviewing the idea of self-worth from different philosophical perspectives in comparison with the Kantian perceptive. Another possibility could be the use of multidisciplinary theoretical
backgrounds by examining self-worth in the philosophical, cultural and psychological sense. This study could also be stretched out to different geographical context or sampling criteria like refugees in neighbouring countries to Syrian or other conflict zones. It could also be applied on a different age group, focusing on children in primary education age. It is also significant to create more academic content related to integration and how it is currently being implemented in Europe. Integration processes are heavily related to education through governmental policies and have a direct effect on refugees’ experience in their country of asylum. Conducting a similar study to this one with a focus on integration classrooms and content could also make a significant study in the piece of research in International and Comparative Education.
References:


Løvlie, L. (2012). Kant's Invitation to Educational Thinking. In Roth, K., & Surprenant, C. (Eds.), *Kant and Education: Interpretations and Commentary* (pp.107-123). Routledge.


## Interview Guide (English)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introductory Questions</strong></td>
<td>1. How old are you and how long have you been in your current country of asylum?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Is this your first country of asylum? If not, what was the previous one?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. How did you arrive to your current country of asylum?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. What did you do or study in your home country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leveraging Mobile Learning</strong></td>
<td>5. How long have you been using mobile technology for education? and what do you use it for?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. What kind of technology and devices do you use and how often?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Describe the programme/course/module you have studied or currently studying.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. On a scale from 1 to 10. How do you evaluate your experience with mobile learning and why?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Does mobile learning hold a practical value for you? and how?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10. Do you have the intention to use mobile learning to learn a different topic in the future?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Did your experience with mobile learning make you ready to strive for further educational endeavours? and develop your credentials further?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
12. How did your refugee experience effect the way you view yourself and the world around you?

13. Do you acknowledge any personal accomplishments you have achieved through mobile learning? If yes, how did these accomplishments effect your sense of self-worth as a refugee?

14. Do you feel that the educational achievements you have done via mobile learning have created new opportunities for you? If yes, what are they?

15. Describe how large was the impact of this experience on you personally and why?

16. Would you like to add something?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>السؤال</th>
<th>الموضوع</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. كم من الوقت مضى على استخدامك للتعلم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة؟ ولماذا تستخدم؟</td>
<td>الاستفادة من التعليم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. ما نوع التكنولوجيا والأجهزة التي تستخدمها وكم مرة؟</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. صف البرنامج / الدورة / الوحدة التي درستها أو تدرسها حالياً.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. على مقياس من 1 إلى 10. كيف تقيم تجربتك مع التعلم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة ولماذا؟</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. هل التعلم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة يحمل قيمة عملية بالنسبة لك؟ وكيف؟</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. هل لديك نية لاستخدام التعلم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة لتعلم موضوع مختلف في المستقبل؟</td>
<td>قيمة الذات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. هل تجري تجربتك مع التعلم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة تجعلك على استعداد لمزيد من المساعي التعليمية؟ وتطوير مهاراتك أبعد من ذلك؟</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. كيف أثرت تجربة لجوءك على الطريقة التي ترى فيها نفسك والعالم من حولك؟</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. هل تؤمن بأي إنجازات شخصية حققتها من خلال التعلم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة؟ إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم، كيف أثرت هذه الإنجازات على إحساسك بالقيمة ذاتك كلاجئ؟</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. هل تشعر أن الإيجابيات التعليمية التي قمت بها من خلال التعلم عن طريق الأجهزة المحمولة قد خلقها فرصة جديدة بالنسبة لك؟ إذا كان الجواب نعم، فما هي؟</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. أوصف مدى تأثير هذه التجربة عليك شخصياً ولماذا؟</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. هل ترغب في إضافة شيء ما؟</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Appendix B

Codes used for anonymising interview participants

SH1 - Student who used ML for HED courses #1
SH2 - Student who used ML for HED courses #2
SH3 - Student who used ML for HED courses #3
SH4 - Student who used ML for HED courses #4
SH5 - Student who used ML for HED courses #5

SL1 - Student who used ML for language learning #1
SL2 - Student who used ML for language learning #2
SL3 - Student who used ML for language learning #3

SB1 - Student who used ML for both #1
SB2 - Student who used ML for both #2
Appendix C

Consent Form for Participation in a Study (English)

- I, hereby acknowledge that, after reading and understanding the study Information Sheet, give my consent to participate in this research project via an interview.

- I understand that the interview will be audio recorded and transcribed and that my identity will be kept anonymous in the study manuscript.

- I understand that my words could be quoted in the manuscript without reviewing my identity.

- I understand that during the interview, I will be given enough time to answer the questions, and have the right to refuse answering any of them.

- I understand that I have the right to ask further questions about the study.

- I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide a reason.

- I will be provided with a copy of this consent form.

For all the points mentioned above, I confirm by signing my name hereafter:

Participant Signature: ____________________________Date:

Researcher Signature: ____________________________Date:
نموذج الموافقة للمشاركة في دراسة

• أقر هنا، بعد قراءة وفهم ورقة المعلومات الخاصة بالدراسة، أن أعطي موافقتي على المشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي عن طريق مقابلة.

• أفهم أن المقابلة سوف تكون مسجلة وأن هويتي ستبقى مجهولة في مخطوط الدراسة.

• أفهم أنه يمكن الاستشهاد بكلامي في المخطوطة دون ذكر هويتي.

• أفهم أنه خلال المقابلة، سيتم اعطائي الوقت الكافي للإجابة على الأسئلة، ولي الحق في رفض الإجابة على أي منها.

• أدرك أن لدي الحق في طرح أسئلة أخرى حول الدراسة.

• أفهم أنه يمكنني الانسحاب من الدراسة في أي وقت دون الحاجة إلى تقديم سبب.

• سيتم تزويدني بنسخة من استمارة الموافقة هذه.

تباعاً لجميع النقاط المذكورة أعلاه، أؤكد موافقتي بالتوقيع أدناه:

توقيع المشارك: _______________________________ التاريخ:

توقيع الباحثة: _______________________________ التاريخ:
- Appendix D

Department of Education

Master's Programme in International and Comparative Education

My name is Rama Alshoufani, and I am currently enrolled in the Masters of International and Comparative Education programme at Stockholm University. I am conducting research about the idea of leveraging Mobile Learning as an educational tool for refugees to achieve a sense of self-worth.

This study aims to understand the educational platform that Mobile Learning provide for Syrian refugees in Europe and what kind of solutions these platforms offer. The study will examine using these platforms to take higher education course and language-learning. After that, it will explore how using these platforms for the mentioned educational goals can help refugee to rebuild their agency and regain a sense of self-worth.

I am looking for participants for this study. These participants should be:

- Refugees
- Syrian
- Residing in Europe
- Above the age of 18
- Have already finished secondary education
- Have used mobile learning for an appropriate amount of time.
- Have used it either to learn a language or to take a higher education course

The interview will take about an hour. It be confidential. All participants will be made anonymous and codes will be used instead of names. They will also sign a participation consent form and keep a copy before initiating the interview.

If you fit the criteria and would like to participate in the study, please contact me at ................ If you also have further questions about this study please feel free to contact me as well.

Rama Alshoufani
برنامج ماجستير التعليم الدولي و المقارن

اسمي راما الشرافاني، وأنا حاليا طالبة ماجستير في برنامج التعليم الدولي والمقارن في جامعة ستوكهولم. أنا أجري بحثاً حول فكرة الاستفادة من التعليم عبر الأجهزة المحمولة كنادرة تعليمية للاجئين لتحقيق الشعور بقيمة الذات.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فهم البرامج التعليمية التي يوفرها التعليم عبر الأجهزة المحمولة للاجئين السوريين في أوروبا، وما هو نوع الحلول التي تقدمها هذه البرامج. سسوف تدرس الدراسة استخدام هذه المنشئات من أجل دورات التعليم العالي وتعلم اللغة. بعد ذلك، سيتم استكشاف كيفية استخدام هذه المنشئات للأهداف التعليمية المذكورة وكيف يمكن أن تساعد اللاجئين لإعادة بناء وكرلائهم واستعادة الإحساس بقيمة الذات.

أنا أبحث عن مشاركين في هذه الدراسة. وينبغي أن يكون المشارك:

- لاجئين
- سوري
- مقيم في أوروبا
- فوق سن 18 عاماً
- قد أنهى مرحلة التعليم الثانوي
- قد استخدم التعلم غير الأجهزة المحمولة لفترة مناسبة من الزمن
- قد استخدمها إما لتعلم لغة أو الحصول على درجة تعليم عالي

ستستغرق المقابلة حوالي ساعة. تكون سرية. سيتم جعل جميع المشاركون مجهولين وسيتم استخدام رموز بدلاً من الأسماء. كما سيوقعون على نموذج موافقة المشاركة ويخففون بتنسيقة قبل بدء المقابلة.

إذا كنت ترغب في المشاركة في الدراسة، يرجى الاتصال بي على ................. إذا كان لديك أيضًا المزيد من الأسئلة حول هذه الدراسة لا تتردد في الاتصال بي كذلك.

راما الشرافاني