Professionals 'perspectives on their collaboration in working with unaccompanied refugee children

A qualitative study

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore some social workers' and psychologists' perspectives on their collaboration concerning unaccompanied refugee children. More specifically; in which situations do the social workers and psychologists collaborate with each other in their work with unaccompanied refugee children and what challenges and possibilities do they describe in their collaborative work? This qualitative study was carried out in one municipality in Sweden with a high quantity of unaccompanied refugee children. Three social workers and two psychologists were interviewed. The interviewees described existing collaboration between the two professions when working with unaccompanied refugee children as regarding the young person´s health. Most often the collaboration was described as taking place in so called sip-meetings that is an obligatory meeting between the two professions regarding the young person's health. However, also challenges regarding their collaboration as lack of resources and communication between these two professions emerged and are discussed.

Keywords; Collaboration, social worker, psychologist, unaccompanied refugee children, challenges, possibilities, resources, communication

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1.Introduction

Statistics from the Swedish Migration Board (2016), indicate that during 2015 the number of unaccompanied refugee children who applied asylum in Sweden increased from 7049 to 35 369. Sweden have never received as many asylum seekers as during 2015. In total Sweden received around 163 000 asylum seekers which are twice as many as in 1992 during the Balkan wars (The Swedish Migration Board /Migrationsverket, 2016). The number of unaccompanied refugee children that have applied for asylum in Sweden until September 2016 is 1796 children (The Swedish Migration Board /Migrationsverket, 2016). In statistics from the chosen municipality (2016), there are about 160 unaccompanied refugee children living in residential care homes for children and young persons.

In Sweden, the municipalities are responsible for the reception of unaccompanied refugee children with help from the Swedish Migration Board and the County Administrative Board (Migrationsverket, 2016). These situations with the big number of unaccompanied refugee children that have been through traumatizing experiences will put high demands on how the authorities and organizations take care of them to get as good start here in Sweden as possible. This is something that most probably require good collaboration among the involved actors and professionals, such as social workers and psychologists.

One question is if social workers and psychologists working with refugee children complete each other in order to give as good service as possible for the interest of the children? Another question is; when it is important that they do collaborate? There are differences between social workers and psychologists since; their educations differ with different specific areas and focus. However, both social workers´ and psychologists' work aims to help individuals. Furthermore, there are limitations in how much they can share with each other and in which situations they can collaborate since both professions have an ethical principle of confidentiality. According to the Social Service Act 15, 2§ Official Secrets Act (2001:453) confidential information should be kept within the trust of the professional.

Anyhow, we believe that collaboration between these two professions could be profitable to benefit from each profession's competence. In this study the focus will be on *how* the collaboration between the two different professions are perceived according to some professionals, to provide the best help possible for unaccompanied refugee children. Furthermore, the study will highlight some challenges and possibilities by the professionals regarding collaboration between them.

2. Aim

The aim of this study was to explore how some social workers and psychologists describe their collaboration regarding unaccompanied refugee children.

2.1 Research Questions

- How do the interviewed professionals describe that there is collaboration in their work with unaccompanied refugee children?
- What challenges and possibilities are described by these professionals regarding collaboration between them?

2.1.1 Essay disposition

First, an introduction about unaccompanied refugee children and how the professionals work are described with general information of how the process is provided in order to get an understanding of the context. Henceforth, a presentation of previous research is declared with an explanation of connection to this study. Furthermore, a presentation of the chosen theory is presented followed with methodology section which provides an explanation of the research process, such as the analysis, validity and credibility aspects of the study. Furthermore, results and analysis are presented with a critical discussion to the chosen theory and previous research. Subsequently, a methodology discussion is presented followed with the findings from the study and further research.

2.2 Central concepts and definitions

Collaboration - The action that enables individuals to work together to a joint purpose that will benefit the outcome (Weinstein, Whittington and Leiba, 2003). When using the word collaboration between social workers and psychologists regarding unaccompanied refugee children it is refer to; The action of "working together" to benefit and help each other.

Unaccompanied Refugee Children - According to the Swedish Migration Board (2016), an unaccompanied child is a child under the age of 18 who has been separated from its parents or caregiver before or after arriving to Sweden.

Unaccompanied Refugee Children Unit (URCU) - acts through the social services in each municipality in Sweden. This unit are the ones placing unaccompanied refugee children in either residential or family homes when they arrive to Sweden. According to the municipality in question the goal of this unit is to help and empower unaccompanied refugee children in becoming independent and secure adults (Borlänge Municipality/ Borlänge Kommun, 2016)

Counselling reception - Is an open reception within the primary health care where children and young persons can receive help. This receptions task is to offer counselling and advice if the child is experiencing depression, anxiety or crises for example. According to county council in Dalarna (2013) this reception place the focus on the child and help the child through a treatment plan if needed (County council Dalarna/Landstinget Dalarna, 2013)

Child and Young Person Psychiatry - Is an abbreviation of child and young person psychiatry developed for children and young person's up to the age of 18 in need of mental support or treatment. According to County Council in Dalarna, at this unit there are both social workers and psychologists working with different treatment programs regarding different problems. (County council Dalarna/Landstinget Dalarna, 2015)

Crisis and Trauma Centre - This unit direct their work to individuals that have been through traumatizing events such as fleeing from war. At this unit both psychologists

and social workers are working and the professionals have good experience within their fields and of working with traumatized individuals. This unit focuses on psychological and psychiatric treatment to help individuals in the best way possible (County council Dalarna/Landstinget Dalarna, 2016)

Sip meetings - Are when the county council and municipality are obligated to have a meeting regarding all actors involved. During these meetings both social workers, psychologists and other actors gather to elaborate a plan regarding an unaccompanied refugee child, for example. This could involve placements or the young person´s health and each actor's responsibility regarding that case. When a request regarding a sip-meeting has been sent out everyone must participate and reschedule or cancel other plans and meetings to attend. In other words, one could say that a sip-meeting is one of the most important meetings regarding both social workers and psychologists working at the social services (The Social Services, 2016).

2.3 Coupling to International Social Work

International social work is given more attention today, since the world becomes more international and people are migrating due to different factors such as globalization and world war conflicts. Social work has its focus on social problems and consequences alternative solutions of them. With the aim of helping individuals creating a mutual well-being, social work is something that will continue to grow since social problems always will remain.

In this research, our focus is on collaboration between different professions working with unaccompanied refugee children. Since world conflicts will continue to grow, the importance of a good collaboration between professionals are essential in working with every individual, especially people who are vulnerable and marginalized.

3. Previous research

In this chapter, further research will be presented and described for the reader to get an understanding of previous studies on similar subject. Each previous research chosen are in some approach focusing on collaboration between different professions and the relevance and importance of it at different levels. Most of the chosen previous researches are also focusing on collaboration and unaccompanied refugee children which are two important sections of our whole research.

3.1 Collaboration between different professions

In Denmark, a new model of cooperation between the police, social services and psychiatry is described (Sesoft et al., 2016). This model investigates a new collaboration strategy of working practice between social services, police and the psychiatry in Frederiksberg, Denmark. The model is developed to help these public sectors to better share relevant information between each other. Also, to improve the collaboration between the sectors involved and better provide support for the citizens.

In April 2009, this model of collaboration was implemented by the Danish authorities to Denmark law. Furthermore, this model of collaboration focused on the three public sectors to reach the more vulnerable and marginalized citizens of the population to better provide service for these users. Unaccompanied refugee children are also a vulnerable group in the population and it is equally important that there is good collaboration between social workers and psychologist working with these children, therefore this previous research is relevant for our study.

In this research, the researchers have made a qualitative research with focus on structured interviews, focus group discussions and observations among the police, social services and the psychiatry. The expected outcomes of this model, from the research were better prevention of crime as well as better assistance for vulnerable groups of individuals. The results of this research showed that when implementing this collaboration model, there were positive changes in the cooperation between the relevant public sectors. (Sesoft et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the model provided a positive change in collaboration between the sectors that were involved. Before 2004 there were no existing collaboration between the involved private sectors in Denmark and since the implementation of the new

collaboration model there has been an improvement regarding to collaborate. Another finding from the study was that an increased development of trust among the different organizations 'members was established, which generates a better outcome of the provided service (Sesoft et al., 2016).

3.2 Obstacles for collaboration

In this research conducted by Geraldsson (2015), obstacles and issues between social workers and other actors regarding children at risk are discussed. It is emphasised that when a person are in contact with different organizations it is important that a good collaboration between them are existing to best help the person in question. This research highlights problems that occur among social workers collaborating regarding working with children, and to discover an understanding to those problems

One result from this research shows that there is a common problem regarding who has the responsibility in each area between the different professions. The lack of professional insight, diffuse responsibilities and poorly integrated roles are contributing factors to ineffective collaboration (Geraldsson, 2015). When there is a lack of routines the actors seem to lack awareness of each actor's responsibility. This is a problem since to help unaccompanied refugee children in the best way possible; the actors should collaborate and improve their communication with each other (Geraldsson 2015).

When conducting this research, the researcher has made a qualitative research with an inductive approach to find patterns of problems regarding to collaboration. The researcher has performed interviews with five social workers and used thematic open questions since it allowed him to get much information regarding the aim in a short time frame. The participants are chosen from three different sized municipalities in Skåne, Sweden and all of them had been working as a social worker with focus on children and young persons for at least two years.

3.3 The importance of collaboration

A study by Sundvall and Isaksson (2015) examines psychologists and psychotherapists experiences when working with unaccompanied refugee children. The responsibilities municipalities and Social Services have regarding service and care for individuals living

within the municipality are discussed in this study. If an unaccompanied child needs care, social services and the municipality are the ones responsible in helping the child receiving the right treatment.

Findings from this study show that 30 % of unaccompanied children arriving to Sweden are most likely to suffer from trauma. Another finding was that if a child arrives in a new country with their family members they were less likely to suffer from trauma. In situations when children arrive alone to a new country it is important that the collaboration between the involving actors is good.

Furthermore, the study found that to get a successful treatment for children, the different actors involved need good relation and collaboration between each other. To get successful treatment, collaboration between the involving actors needs to be good. In cases when collaboration between different actors has been good the results and outcome of the treatment have been good (Sundvall and Isaksson, 2015).

When conducting this research, the researchers performed an interview study with nine psychologists, alternative psychotherapist's experiences of important factors in therapy for unaccompanied refugee children. Each participant was individually interviewed with eight semi structured interview questions. After conducting the interviews a thematic analysis were made and identified five sub themes which indicated both possibilities and challenges. The possibilities indicated that autogenic exercises and psycho pedagogy are helpful in trauma treatment. However, challenges indicated were the difficulties in observation of when and how to begin a trauma treatment (Sundvall and Isaksson, 2015).

3.4 Positive outcome of collaboration

In an evaluation study by Backlund (2008), she investigates the collaboration between school and social services when working with children and young person´s. This is an evaluation by a school and family team in Sweden with the aim to investigate the effects of their work. The purpose of this investigation was to find out if the school- and family team have contributed to students with psychosocial complex problems getting support within permanent school time, and if this has contributed to decreased pressure on exercise of public authority from social services (Backlund, 2008).

To answer this research's aim, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used; the study has been carried out with interviews with both parents and teachers with experiences from the school and family team. In total, 16 telephone interviews were conducted, 14 of this interviews was with mothers of students. Interviews with school staff that have been involved with school- and family teams was conducted as well as two group interviews with representatives from school management and the municipality. Two interviews with three representatives from the social services Child and Young person´s unit were also conducted.

The result from this research indicated that the school and family team contribute to better health among students and that support can be given in to a broader extent. Furthermore, this research shows that the problem among students in school has been lower and that there was a better collaboration between the homes and school. The collaboration of school and family team has resulted in a positive impact between the school and social services; however, there is a need of cooperation to keep the collaboration positive (Backlund, 2008)

3.5 Strategy of collaboration

In a case-study carried out by Matscheck (2011), an investigation of the local collaboration between the psychiatry and social psychiatry are made in one municipality in Sweden. The aim of this research was to explore which structures and processes are affecting the collaboration between the relevant actors, and to receive an idea of how a municipal social welfare board and a local psychiatry can work with a long-term strategy of collaboration. The study has its focus on collaboration among adults between the age of 18 and 65.

This research is a qualitative case-study with strategic sampling of participants and 14 undertaken interviews among local and private psychiatrists. To receive as many perspectives as possible, the participants were managers, co-ordinators and collaborative persons with different functions and responsibilities. Five participants worked at the psychiatric non-institutional care unit, eight participants worked at the social services and one at the social service centre (Matscheck, 2011).

The results of this research indicated that collaboration either happens or should happen regarding questions of a client/patient's life. Depending on the situation of the client

and the need of help, collaboration is important between different actors (Matscheck, 2011). The study includes a presentation of how collaboration is an important factor between different actors with an evaluation of previous work from the municipality and other actors to maintain and achieve an improved collaboration. Matscheck (2011) presents several obstacles in the work of collaboration and argues that it is important to have routines of collaboration at each workplace.

3.6 Conclusion

In this section, a summary and conclusion of previous research is presented, followed with an explanation of their relevance for this study.

3.6.1 Summary and conclusion

The previous research used in this study highlights collaboration between different professionals, followed with obstacles, impacts, outcomes and strategies of collaboration. Some reoccurring patterns that can be found in all the chosen researches are the importance of collaboration provided by the professionals. When professionals collaborate with each other important factors are improved which generates better service. In all the chosen previous literature, the focus is on collaboration between different involving actors, followed with how and when collaboration functions.

When implementing the collaboration model in Denmark, the results was a positive change of the sectors involved which generated better work (Sesoft et al.,2016). In the research by Geraldsson (2015) they found that ineffective collaboration between the involving actors occurred when the professionals had poor communication with each other, followed with bad integrated roles and poor insight of each professional's responsibilities. To improve the service provided by these actors' better collaboration was the key to provide better service. In the research by Sundvall and Isaksson (2015) the result showed that in order for a successful treatment, good collaboration is needed in order to provide the best care possible for the traumatized children. In the research by

Backlund (2008) explored that when the school and family team are collaborating with each other, they contributed to better health among the students and the support is provided in a broader context. In the case study by Matscheck (2011) it was explored that it is essential with collaboration between the involving actors, local psychiatry and

social psychiatry to maintain and achieve collaboration.

Conclusion can be drawn from the previous research that good collaboration is essential between professionals to provide the best outcome as possible for each part involved. All previous research comes to be relevant for this study since the focus is on collaboration between different professionals. Each research has its focus on different features of collaboration and between different professionals.

4. Theoretical framework

4.1 Communication Theory

Gregory Bateson (1904-1980) was a British anthropologist and a theorist in communication and systems (Bateson, 1998). In his theory of learning he discusses learning and communication and argues that there is no possibility to communication without cohesion and context. Bateson had his interest within the collaboration between humans and searched for different explanations of how humans communicate (Bateson, 1998).

In *"Between the words - Communication in Practice"* by Per Jensen and Inger Ulleberg (2013), the basic assumptions within communication is brought up with a review of communication theories and systemic communication theory. This book brings up how different professions often collaborate in relation to the same client, with the unaccompanied refugee child as the client. It is stated by Jensen and Ulleberg (2013) that theories and explanations about communication between individuals often are about the verbal language, and how we use it when communicating with each other. Gregory Bateson's communication theory is the theory given most attention by Jensen and Ulleberg (2013). Bateson's theory explains the communication between individuals as:

- It is impossible to not communicate.
- We always communicate regarding relation and content.
- We are always communicating at different levels at the same time.

- Interaction is something that needs to be understood in a circle.
- The perspective of relationship is essential in communication.

These five premises create the frame of the relationship oriented communication theory and its apprehension. According to Bateson (1998), individuals communicating will always be the most interrupted aspect of relations. Another tradition within the field of communication has its focus on the content of interaction claiming the importance of an equal and free dialogue as a goal for communication (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013).

According to Bateson (1998), communication is about how we understand the reality and how we perceive certain situations and interactions. When interacting and collaborating with humans in school, healthcare and social services, we come across different ideas of how to understand the human and its development, thinking, learning, and changing (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013). When communicating with others we can understand psychological and social phenomenas, and as a human one can create an identity through knowledge and values from communicating. This is something that becomes useful in the professional life as well, as for social workers and psychologists. In interaction and collaboration with others one can develop collective ways to understand the reality as collective ideas, values and constructions (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013).

Within the field of communication, the possibilities are many to collaborate and develop new patterns and ideas in different profession, especially between humans from different contexts, and different understanding of that context. In Jensen and Ulleberg (2013), different distinctions within communication in practice are discussed as the importance of listening to the clients and always let the client be most important. However, there might emerge obstacles in communication since humans are different with different values and understandings and it can create destructive interactions (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013).

The phenomena of communication are central for several professions and can be defined, described and analysed from different aspects. Communication theory is connected to different subjects trying to explain the content of communication (Jensen

and Ulleberg, 2013).

One way to explain communication as argued earlier is through a process of a circle where dialogue and collaboration are central concepts in a phenomenon that is wide ranging and complex and separate through studying communication at different levels and areas. One can divide communication in different areas as social work, pedagogical work, health care and therapy, for example. Also, one can divide the field of communication in different areas such as:

- Communication in relationships.
- Communication in groups.
- Communication in the public sector.
- Communication within organisations.
- Communication in media.

For our study the theory of communication is relevant since it explains communication at different levels. Our focus is on the investigation of collaboration between two professions and in collaboration, the communication comes to play an essential part. If there is no communication between the two professions, there cannot be a collaboration. If we manage to find how the communication between social workers and psychologists can look like and to what extent they do communicate, we might also find patterns of what the collaborations look like.

According to Dainton (2011), communication is a process as in the flow of information between two individuals and it could be through controlling, planning or managing information. To communicate is how individuals control, plan, understand, love and lead for example - it is not only one thing happening in our personal and professional lives. According to research, communication is usually understood as achieving a fortunate balance between appropriateness and effectiveness (Dainton, 2011).

With appropriateness, the meaning could be to fulfil social expectations for a certain situation while effectiveness can mean to what extent you reached your goals in an interaction. Did your information reach the receiver? Within the theory of communication, Dainton (2011) explains three types of theories. The first theory is the

common-sense theory or also referred to as theory-in-use. This theory is usually created by an individual's own experiences or developed from close relations in life as family or friends. The common-sense theories can help us how to communicate with each other from our common sense. One example in common-sense theory could be to not date someone you work with, the reason of this could be the belief that it will always end badly, from either own experiences or someone else (Dainton, 2011).

A second part in communication theory is the *working theory* which is about generalizations regarding certain professions and their best techniques for doing something. In comparison to the common-sense theory, the working theory is more systematic since it presents agreed-on ways in certain professions (Dainton, 2011). The third theory described is the *scholarly theory* with a broader focus on abstract and accurate explanations for communication than working theories and common-sense theories.

The reason for choosing communication theory in our study is the importance of communication within collaboration. In order to collaborate, communication needs to be implemented somehow and it is an essential tool to improve and use communication within collaboration. When conducting our study, we focused on the collaboration and there is no certain theory of collaboration since it is a broad concept. Therefore, to analysing our results from our interviews the theory of communication is relevant since it is important in collaboration.

5. Methodology

In this chapter the methodological aspect of the study is demonstrated, such as: research design, mood of procedure, sampling, tools of analysis, ethical considerations as well as validity, credibility, reliability and generalizability.

5.1 Research design

To answer the aim and research questions in this study a qualitative method was chosen. Semi - structured individual interviews with open-ended questions were chosen. Patton (2004) states that when using open-ended questions allows the interviewees to answer each question individually. When using open-ended questions a broader view of the

answers is received since open-ended questions require more than one word answers. Patton (2004) describes that by using this type of interview-method makes the collection somewhat systematic and easier to anticipate data. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) argue that using a qualitative method in research, enables the interviewees to explain the meaning of their experiences with scientific explanations. The choice of method is dependent on what the researcher aims to answer and some questions can only be answered through a qualitative method. When using a qualitative method, the researcher manages to receive information from fewer people on a deeper level (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015).

5.2 Mode of procedure

Previous research, literature and articles were collected from the school library, web database DIVA and from the course literature by using specific search words in the database to find the right information. Based on the information that was needed for this study the search-words used for the collection of information was; Social Workers, Psychologists, Collaboration, Unaccompanied Refugee Children and Communication. These search-words were best suitable to get the right information to use in this study since these are the keywords in the study. Many studies were found on the mentioned topics; however, there were a few articles and previous research that was found on similar topics as our study that could be relevant. When searching for previous research and articles a combination of the search-words was used, such as Social Workers and Psychologists Collaboration. It is shown that when conducting the search for relevant articles many hits was found, however we found five researches that were most suitable and relevant for our study. Therefore, those five are used as previous research and to back up the findings in results, analysis and in the discussion part. Many of the hits were found on the specific topics however they were not relevant to this study.

5.2.1 Sampling

The method of sampling chosen for this study is *purposive samplin*g that is a non-probability sampling. Patton (2004) describes that purposive sampling refers to researchers relying on their own judgement when choosing participants.

Since the focus is on the collaboration between social workers and psychologists within the same municipality, the first decision was to choose one municipality in Sweden

many unaccompanied refugee children arrive to. After the choice of municipality, a search for professionals within that specific municipality and field were made. Each participant was first contacted through e-mail with a description of the study and information about us as researchers and the aim of the research.

The reason for selecting these participants was; first, they are all working as professionals within the professions needed for this study. Secondly, the participants were two psychologists and one of them a social worker was collaborating with each other and therefore valuable information would be provided from the interviews.

5.2.2 Investigation process

Before the interviews were carried out the participants were informed with the content and aim of the study and what their participation would value this study (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015). When the participants agreed to participate in interviews, the interview questions were e-mailed to each one of them one day before conducting the interview for them to have time to go through the questions in beforehand. One social worker working at the Unaccompanied Refugee Children Unit (URCU) was contacted through e-mail and by phone to decide a date for the interview. During the interview this social worker recommended another social worker that also was working at URCU. Also, this social worker was approached with an e-mail and a phone call to plan an interview. In the chosen municipality, a new unit, Crisis and Trauma Centre opened in September 2016. At this centre one social worker and two psychologists are working. The psychologists and the social worker at this centre were contacted through e-mail and by phone to plan the interviews.

The interviews took place at the interviewees` workplace, the interviews with URCU 1 and URCU 2 took place at the Unaccompanied refugee children unit where they both work. The interviews with PS1, PS 2 and SOC also took place at their workplace, Crisis and trauma centre. Both researchers were present during all the interviews and were equally active during the process. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), it is good to before the interviews to explain for the participants the value of them participation for this study and what the study will be about. Before the interview started, each participant signed a consent form that contained information of the research and assured the participants that they would not be mentioned in the study with their real names.

The participants were also informed that the interviews were going to be recorded to get their approval of this. Each participant was asked the same 13 questions and each interview took about 30-40 minutes to conduct.

5.3 Tools of analysis

The face to face interviews were conducted in a semi-structured way with 13 open-ended questions (see appendix). According to Patton (2004) during the interviews, answers from all the participants can be found as themes but at different times during the interviews. Each interview was recorded using audio recorder as well as the researcher were taking notes during the interviews. One researcher was asking questions and the other one were taking notes, both parts are equally important; therefore the focus were on both. According to Patton (2004), the researchers can early in a research find themes. All the recorded interviews were transcribed with the help of the program ´´ Express Scribe´´ that is professional audio player software designed to assist transcription of recordings. Both researchers transcribed the interview through the program ´´Express Scribe´´. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) data coding of the collected material enables the researchers to find codes from all the interviews. Emotional expressions, laughs and expressions such as "ah" and "hmm" were also transcribed from the interviews to make sure everything was included.

From an early stage, we worked and processed the collected information from the interviews in an analytic way. Both researchers looked at the interviews and wrote down the most essential information, then we discussed our findings with each other to get a unified understanding of the interviews. From this process, we could find similarities in words and sentences that frequently reappeared in the interviews. This words and sentences were marked in different colours to categorise the themes and to make it easier to find them in the interviews.

Coding and sentence concentration provides structure and overview of the interviews (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; 217). According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), coding has for a long time been used for analysing texts and refers to when linking one word or several key words to connect to a larger context. By doing this it will facilitate when we are searching for the themes.

When analysing the interviews, a deductive approach was used. According to Patton (2004) using a deductive approach to group the themes that the researchers have found is good in a qualitative research when there is a time limit. Patterns of the chosen themes was found by the researcher as well as the program "Express Scribe", the program highlighted the themes with the colour yellow.

5.4 Essay credibility

In this chapter aspects regarding credibility, validity, reliability and generalisability are discussed in accordance to this study.

5.4.1 Credibility/Validity

One issue regarding essay credibility might be the translation of the interviews. According to Patton (2004), it is important to accurately translate information from one language to another; otherwise important information will be lost. Since the interviews were conducted in Swedish, important information might be changed when translating the transcribed data to English. We were therefore careful when we transcribed the interviews to get an accurate translation.

To increase the validity of the study the same inquiry form in all our interviews have been used. In the interviews, 13 open-ended questions were used, this allows the interviewee to answer the questions more open and detailed. According Patton (2004) this will increase the validity of the information.

5.4.2 Reliability

Patton (2004) emphasizes that all qualitative researchers should be concerned about reliability of analysing the results and the quality of the research. According to Patton (2004), a person with low experience regarding researching can have an impact on the reliability of the study. As we both were new as researchers this may have impacted negatively on our study.

5.4.3 Generalizability

When conducting qualitative research the essence is to find patterns and to make sense

of the information to provide the findings without compromising the value and richness. As Patton (2004) states, it is important to keep in mind that the finding cannot be generalized since that is not the goal with a qualitative study, the goal is rather to contextualized understanding of the research.

The purpose with this study was to find out how collaboration is explained between the involving professions. However, it is important to keep in mind that the findings from our research cannot be generalized to how the collaboration between these professions look like in other municipalities.

5.5 Ethical considerations

Each participant signed a consent form before conducting the interviews with information that they would remain anonymous in the study. The participants' names were changed and they are referred to as; URCU 1, URCU 2, PS 1, PS 2 and SOC. After the interviews were transcribed by the researchers, a copy of the interviews was sent to the participants so the participants could go through the interviews and see if the information was correct. By sending back a copy of the interviews to the participant the collected information will get an increased validity and reliability (Patton, 2004)

After the procedure of transcribing the interviews, both researchers read the transcription three times to find themes for the analysis. Themes were highlighted, meaning that all the interviews were compared to each other and themes that could be found in all the interviews.

5.6 Ethical principles of confidentiality

Both social workers and psychologists are working according to ethical principles of confidentiality. Ethical principles of confidentiality refer to every person working in public or private sectors. Since the two professions are working with this principle, there might be a limitation within each profession of when information cannot be shared regarding the ethical principle of confidentiality. Therefore, during the interviews we were clear about that now names etc. would be mentioned.

6. Results and analysis

In sum, our findings from the interviews regarding our aim and research questions can be concluded in that in some cases collaboration occurred between social workers and psychologists in their work regarding the health of unaccompanied refugee children, although with challenges and lack of communication between them.

However, communication can differ and is not always positive. From the interviews with the psychologists there seems to be collaboration between the two professions. The psychologist's responsibility begins regarding the treatment of the young person as in EMDR (Trauma Treatment) and PTSD (Post traumatic stress disorder) treatment which seems to be relevant in treating unaccompanied refugee children. However, there seems to be more frustration than positive experiences from the psychologists regarding the collaboration between the professions.

6.1 The Participants

The two social workers at the Unaccompanied Refugee Children Unit (URCU) are named **URCU 1** and **URCU 2**. URCU 1 has been working at this place since it started in 2014 and URCU 2 have only been working at the URCU for about 4 months. This unit belongs to the social services in the municipality.

PS 1 is one of the psychologists working at the Crises and Trauma Centre. She has been working there since it opened in September 2016. PS 1 investigates and treats symptoms among the young person´s and place diagnoses. Sometimes her job is to give practical advice to the young person´s as in sleep and health or gives out different stabilization exercises to strengthen the individual. When needed, they collaborate with the health care to give out medicine, for example. PS 1 is working with trauma treatment and trauma-focused psychotherapy. If she suspects that a young person are in bad company as in prostitution for example, she brings up the subject and explains the risks of it.

PS 2 is the other psychologist working at the Crises and Trauma Centre. She has also been working there since this unit open in September 2016. PS 2 treats symptoms and diagnoses among young person´s and has experience of working with unaccompanied

refugee children. PS 2 have experience of collaboration with both the county council and the municipality regarding unaccompanied refugee children.

SOC is the only social worker working at the Crisis and Trauma Centre in. SOC has also been working at this unit since they open in September 2016, but have earlier experience from other units regarding the same work.

6.2.1 In which situations do the professionals describe that they collaborate in their work with unaccompanied refugee children?

6.2.2 An agreement of existing collaboration.

From the interviews with the social workers we experienced that there was an agreement among the professions of an existing collaboration. However, we found the collaboration to be lacking between the two professions which are of importance to help the unaccompanied refugee children and their needs. The existing collaboration between the two professions is referred to sip- meeting where both professions participate to the best interest of the young person. (the social workers referred to the refugee children as the ''young person'' during the interviews even though the children they are working with are between the age of 4 and 21). According to Bateson's communication theory, he argues that it is essential to focus on the content of communication and not communication itself (Jensen and Ulleberg), 2013). This can be understood that even if there is an existing collaboration, the communication of it can be discussed whether it is good or not.

Both social workers at URCU described that collaboration between social workers and psychologists usually starts during the placement and investigation of the young person. They expressed that if there is an investigation regarding health of the young person and if the young person appears to feel depressed, for example, the social workers can contact Child and Young Person Psychiatry for further investigation and treatment. According to Bateson (1998), communication is central for several professions and this is where communication is needed between the social worker and the youth. If there is

no communication between them it will be difficult to provide help for the youth (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013).

From the previous case-research carried out by Matscheck (2011), the collaboration was mainly focused on the different actors in the psychiatry and of the importance of collaboration for the clients and patients in the psychiatry care; therefore, we thought it would be interesting and relevant for our study. This research managed to undertake several interviews with professions at different positions which probably gave the research more valid and extended results. Although, comparing to our study, the results of both Matschecks (2011) research and our study exposes the importance of an existing collaboration when working with vulnerable and marginalized groups of individuals.

6.2.3 Important to notice if more help is needed

Furthermore, the social workers expressed that as a social worker it is important to notice when the youth might need help from Child and Young Person Psychiatry or the psychiatry and this might take time.

> " *It is important as a social worker to understand when we might not be the right person to help with this trauma for example, and it is something that is a case for the psychiatry. Sometimes this can take time if the young person miss their last four numbers in the personal number because without those numbers the psychiatry cannot start an interview with the young person" (URCU 2)*

According to one social worker at the URCU, a social worker always must wait until the young person are ready to talk about existing issues. It is common that the youth feel bad or are depressed because of what they have been through, and each one of them recover in different ways. Often the young person are not motivated to go and talk to counselling reception or Child and Young Person Psychiatry, therefore it is important for the social worker to see when there is a need of collaboration.

> *"Each young person handle trauma or depression in different ways, some of them have an easier time to talk about how they feel compared to others. In*

some cases, the young persons are not motivated to talk about how they feel and those cases it is important as a professional to see the need of the young person". (SOC)

One of the psychologist expressed that there is a collaboration between the psychologists and the social worker working at the Crisis- and Trauma unit. He also described that there is collaboration with the municipalities' social workers since they are the ones that are responsible for the unaccompanied refugee children within the municipality.

" In the cases where there is a need of a collaboration between us professionals regarding a young person, we, at this unit du then collaborate. Sometimes other actors are involved, in some cases, such as the social services, regarding the young person". (SOC)

In addition, he expressed that in some cases, there is a collaboration with social workers in other municipalities regarding some children. In Jensen and Ulleberg (2013), it is argued that communication and interaction can be explained as in a circle. In this circle, there is a process of dialog and collaboration as central which can explain the collaboration between different actors (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013). Both the social workers at the Child and Young Person Psychiatry Unit argued that a collaboration can occur when the social worker might have to call the psychologist regarding advice of the young person's situation. Usually it is the residential home or family home who contacts the social worker when experiencing that the young person might be depressed or is in need of help. They expressed that the young person can have sleeping disorders and problems in school and in that situation it could be good to call the psychiatry to ask for advice.

"It can be when one has to ask for advice, but mostly it is the residential home that contacts us for example if they experience that the young person, we might have had a meeting and we notice that the young person are very depressed and might not get up in the mornings and has issues having trouble with sleeping, to then call and ask for advice that we experience this issue." (URCU 1)

6.2.4 Sip-meetings

One of the psychologists stated that there could be a collaboration when the psychologist must call in for a SIP-meeting when there is a special situation. She expressed that the collaboration differs depending on the situation of the young person; however, the example below is a good example of how the collaboration between the two professions can look like;

> *"One youth was placed in a so-called family home in one municipality, by another municipality. The boy was afraid; he and another two boys lived in what they experienced as the forest, in a house hundred meters from the host family. They did not eat with the host family, the man in the family come with food so that the boys could cook their own dinner. I called the municipality that the boys belong to and explained the situation. They came and took the boys away (they were two boys) that same evening. "* (PS 2)

The social worker at the Crises and trauma centre argues that the most common way social workers and psychologist collaborates involves sip - meetings.

> *"The collaboration often involve sip-meetings, a coordinating individual plan, that is the most common way of collaboration that I am aware of "* (SOC)

A sip-meeting is an individual plan for the young person and this is something that the young person cannot say no to. According to communication theory communication is of importance as in communication in groups and communication within organisations (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013). At a sip-meeting there is a communication in a group between different actors and organisations.

6.2.5 The importance of sip-meetings

The participants emphasise the importance of sip-meetings in the collaboration between the two professions. However, there seems to be a lack of sip-meetings and the reasons of that, according to our interviewees, seem to be the lack of time and resources. With a sip-meeting, collaboration can be more clear as in the social worker's responsibility and where the psychologist step in and to not forget the other actor's responsibility such as the school and medical care. An organization has the right to request a sip-meeting to gather competence from other actors, to divide responsibilities and create arrangement

for each involved actor. According to Dainton (2011), communication can occur through planning, controlling or managing. In a sip-meeting the aim is to plan and control the actors' different responsibilities regarding the young person. One of the social workers argued about the importance of sip-meeting from earlier experiences, when sip-meetings were more frequent and that it had a positive effect on collaboration between the actors:

> *"Not at this place, since I have not been working here that long although when I was working at the social services, it was not with URCU but it was sip-meetings where the psychiatry was involved. We had a meeting once every six month. If it was ok with the client it could be more often and it was very good for that case. It was pliable and everyone was, the client was very pleased."*(SOC)

According to one of the psychologists, they request sip-meetings when needed, as in serious situations when the young person are in a situation that cannot wait. In that meeting, the psychologist can help the young person to explain the situation.

''In serious situations I request a SIP-meeting with the social services. I often experience a lack of cultural competence among the social workers which creates challenges for the young person, and I try to help the young person to reach what they want to have said. '' (PS 1)

6.3 What challenges and possibilities are described by the professionals regarding the collaboration between them?

6.3.1 Possibilities

From the interviews with both the social workers and the psychologists we found that the professions experience challenges regarding collaboration. From the interviews, we explored that the professions stressed that possibilities exists to improve the collaborative work between the two professions. According to Bateson's communication theory it is impossible to not communicate, since we are doing it all the time, (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013). However, communication could include more collaboration to make the communication between professions more cohesive.

Sundvall and Isaksson (2015) who investigated the experiences of psychologists and

psychotherapists working with unaccompanied refugee children found that a good collaboration is essential when working with unaccompanied refugee children since it can help the children in coping with trauma as one common diagnose from their experiences. In our study, the social workers and psychologists seem to have shared meanings of the collaboration and the knowledge of each other's experiences. If each actor within a municipality collects knowledge regarding each profession they collaborate with, it could have a positive effect on the unaccompanied refugee children (Sundvall and Isaksson, 2015).

6.3.2 Existing possibilities

One of the psychologists expressed that collaboration can occur when the psychologist must call the migration board regarding a case. Although she states that there could be a better collaboration since she does not know the exact tasks that the social worker has even if they are working within the same organization.

"We are a small team of three people working at this unit so we do need to collaborate with each other regarding some cases. However, our collaborative work could improve because sometimes I don´t know the exact task of the social worker" PS1

According to the other psychologist there are many occasions when she could receive benefits from the social worker but it does not happen very often. To achieve balance between the professions communication is of importance (Dainton, 2011). Within the communication theory the common-sense theory is described as a tool to communication through our common sense. As a professional one could use the common-sense in order to collaborate with other professions using their own common sense (Dainton, 2011). One of the psychologists argued that the collaboration between the two professions are good, however there could be improvement to better work together for the best interest of the child;

> *"We should have meetings, us professionals and the municipalities, we should discuss responsibilities and what we can and are allowed to inform to each*

other. Write regulations in paper on mutual information so that the young

person and the custodian can sign together" (PS 2)

One of the social workers points out that the possibilities could be good, if there were good collaboration between the two professions it would be easier for all parties involved and that would also generate in smaller workload for both professions.

6.3.3 Challenges

6.3.4 Waiting periods of investigations

According to the social workers there seems to more challenges than possibilities regarding the collaboration. The first challenge that was brought up during one of the interviews was the time it takes to receive residence permit from the Swedish Migration Board. The psychologists do not begin a treatment plan for the youth before they know if the youth will receive residence permit since it is such a large process. There is a lack of time and long handling processes with many cases which creates challenges between the two professions.

> *" In the beginning I experienced that there was challenges. When I was in*
> *contact with BUP, we often received a no we cannot help you because the*
> *young person does not have asylum. The young person miss the four last*
> *numbers in their personal number and at that time we had started to talk about*
> *that we cannot put that in the system and us as social workers got told that all*
> *asylum young person´s have the same rights as other young person´s and we*
> *have to be able to receive them."* (URCU 1)

6.3.5 Lack of time

According to one social worker the collaboration between the different actors can improve, but there seems to be a lack of time. When the workload is high for all actors involved such as social services, county council and the municipality it makes it difficult to collaborate. Another challenge mentioned by one social worker is the ''quick fix'' of the young person. With this the social worker argued that sometimes the health care gives the young person medicine for depression or sleeping disorders with no

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further treatment plan.

> "We *have much longer waiting periods of investigations. And it is a long*
> *process for the young person´s to go through, but say that I have one youth that*
> *have been waiting for 1,5 years and have not even had his first meeting yet. If*
> *he would have been traumatized it is very hard to continuing working if we*
> *cannot support him if it is 1,5 years one should be able to go through BUP and*
> *start treating the young person."* (URCU 2)

Another challenge mentioned by one social worker is the office waiting period at the
Swedish Migration Board. With the long process time, it takes longer time for the
young person to feel safe and begin a treatment plan if needed. From her earlier
experience from Child and Young Person Psychiatry, furthermore the social worker
argued that the young person´s sometimes might receive medicine for sleeping disorders
or depression with no further follow up plan.

> *'' The judgement I have made is that the residential home or family home can*
> *meet the young person's needs, although there are sometimes problems*
> *regarding depression or sleeping disorders and the young person receives*
> *medicine against it with no further treatment plan, it is like a quick fix.''*
> (URCU 1)

6.3.6 Lack of communication

One challenge seems to be the lack of communication between the organisations *within*
the professions. The social workers at the URCU brings up one example of when there
was supposed to be a SIP meeting which means that everyone cancels other plans to
attend.

> "For example, we were told that we would arrive to a sip-meeting regarding
> one of the young person´s and when we arrived it turned out that there were no
> sip-meeting. It was just a meeting with an interest from the Child and Young
> Person Psychiatry to see how we are working with the young
> person´s" (URCU 2)

When everyone had arrived to the meeting it turned out that there was not actually a SIP meeting but just an interest from Child and Young Person Psychiatry where they were curious in how URCU was working with the young person´s and so forth. This is an example of a lack of content and cohesion of communication which is essential according to Bateson's communication theory (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013).

6.3.7 Unsure of one's competence

Another challenge stated by URCU 1 was that as a social worker one always must think of the consequences before speaking. If they were to ask something that is not within their field of knowledge they should refer to someone else. It is important to keep in mind *´´If I ask this question what the outcome will be.´´*

"One always have to think about what they are doing, if I start to dig for information and continue to do so with for example an traumatized young person, what is it that I have started here." (URCU 1)

Within communication theory on theory is the working theory, which describes different techniques regarding certain professions, (Dainton, 2011). From our findings regarding the lack of communication and insecurity of one's competence the working theory within communication can become useful to improve communication.

6.3.8 Lack of knowledge about each other's competences

One of the psychologists argues that there seems to be a challenge in the knowledge about each profession and a lack of communication between them at the workplace;

> *''I do not really know what the social worker can do and manage. And sometimes it feels like the social worker does not know that himself. I have not received any clear answers.''* and that *'' I experience that there is a high*

workload on us, the psychologists and a lack of initiative from the social worker. I do not like to tell people what to do. '' (PS 1)

There seems to be a tendency from her as a psychologist to take too much of the workload instead of delegate it to her colleagues. According to this psychologist, there is a lack of cultural knowledge and competence among the social workers which makes the situation worse for the patient. When applying communication theory, communication can be divided into different areas as in communication in relationships and public sector, (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013). Therefor it is important to share knowledge as in cultural differences between the professions.

Some challenges regarding the collaboration between the two professions seems to be that social workers often want more information about the young person they are working with then they are entitled to;

"Social *workers often demand, supported by certain laws, to get copies of young person's entire journal. We have protested against the way up to the Appeal and got right*"(PS 2)

Analysis

Sestoft et al. (2016) presented a collaboration model for public sectors to better share relevant information with each other in Denmark. This research was about the collaboration between the police and social services and the result of it was that with a collaboration model, the collaboration got improved. However, we did not receive such result from the interviews that there is an existing model to better improve communication. From our findings and results, the social workers and psychologists might improve their collaboration with an existing model to strive for to receive a better communication and lower the challenges of the collaboration. It is easy to communicate since individuals are doing it all the time; although it is important that the communication reach the receiver and that the message from the communication is correctly understood (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013). According to Bateson (1998), it is impossible to communicate without context and cohesion. One challenge that is pointed out by the social worker at the crises and trauma centre is that the communication

between the two professions needs to be improved. Another issue that he brings to attention is that the entire process sometimes takes a long time due to the overload of work that these two professions have now. According to Jensen and Ulleberg (2013), communication can be explained as a process of a circle, where collaboration and a dialogue are central. From our interviews, we can see a result in a lack of communication and it could be explained as the dialogue is missing in it within the collaboration.

> *" When working with several cases you just want the work to roll on so that you have time for all the cases."* (SOC)

According to the social worker, collaboration is something that social services and the psychiatry need to work on and improve. In some cases, individuals are given the wrong treatment for their problems. One example is that there are many that do not need psychiatric help but instead they need psychosocial help that the social services can help with.

> *"Overall I think that this is something that the social services and the psychiatric needs to work more on because there are quite many, I have noticed, that might not should need to be within the psychiatric, instead the need psychosocial help that the social services should deal with"* (SOC)

A main challenge that both professions seem to be experiencing is the lack of time. Both social workers and psychologists describe a high case load and express that they are not able to work in accordance to what they should, due to the overload of cases. According to the social workers, there is an existing collaboration between social workers and psychologists when needed, since they complete each other with their different competence. From our interviews, we found out that the social workers are the ones that meet the unaccompanied children in the first place before placing them at HVB homes or in family homes. Furthermore, there seems to be a collaboration when the social services must contact the psychiatry. One example could be if the youth seems to be depressed or has issues with sleeping, it is common for the social worker to call a psychologist to ask for advice and maybe schedule a meeting for a further treatment plan. Although, it can take time before the youth decides to ask for help, the

social worker always must wait for the young person when he or she is ready to receive help. It seems to be more common that the social workers and psychologist meet when there is a replacement of the young person and when the social workers need a documentation or investigation of the young person's health.

The reasons of challenges in collaboration seem to be because of lack of time and resources from each organization. With more planning and a better dialogue the two professions might enhance a better communication in the future.

In the second previous study by Geraldsson (2015) the aim was to investigate obstacles and issues regarding social workers and other actors regarding children at risk with the findings of that there is a lack of collaboration and communication between different actors. This previous research received similar results as our study, since we found that the lack of communication is one of the main issues to every challenge presented in the interviews. Geraldsson (2015) also received the findings that there is an issue of who has the responsibility with a high responsibility on the social workers. In our research, one of the psychologists brings up the issue of not knowing the responsibility and knowledge of the social worker leading to the psychologist taking more responsibility than the social worker. If there would be a better communication between these professions the collaboration and knowledge could increase (Geraldsson, 2015).

From the research by Backlund (2008) we can see that collaboration between different sectors are of importance and can develop and maintain better health among children and young person´s. According to our results the collaboration needs an improvement and which could help the unaccompanied refugee children create a better future here in Sweden. One could argue that there is always a need of a good collaboration between sectors regarding children and young persons and this previous research find results that when the school, social services and families collaborate the youths creates better well-being. This is not referred to each child and young person, especially not unaccompanied refugee children since they arrive to Sweden without their parents. Although, the previous research by Backlund (2008) can support our findings and results within the collaboration between social workers and psychologists. However, to maintain a positive collaboration between different actors, it is important to support it and keep a good communication (Backlund, 2008).

According to the psychologists there should be more meetings regarding the responsibilities of each actor and to what extend the information can be shared. Also, certain guidelines should be implemented regarding where the different actors such as the municipalities, social workers and psychologists can benefit from each other. This is something the social workers from URCU mention as well, regarding the young person's. That there should be a better description from each actor what they are doing and working with to not confuse the young person, since there are meeting with the municipality, social services, schools and health care the young person might sometimes be confused about each actor's tasks.

In sum, our findings from the interviews regarding our aim and research questions can be concluded that there seems to be a collaboration between social workers and psychologists in their work with unaccompanied refugee children, although with challenges and lack of communication between them. According to Bateson's communication theory it is impossible to not communicate, since we are doing it all the time, (Jensen and Ulleberg, 2013). However, communication can differ and is not always positive.

From the interviews with the psychologists there seems to be collaboration between the two professions. The psychologist's responsibility begins regarding the treatment of the young person as in EMDR (Trauma Treatment) and PTSD (Post traumatic stress disorder) treatment which seems to be relevant in treating unaccompanied refugee children. However, there seems to be more frustration than positive experiences from the psychologists regarding the collaboration between the professions.

7. Discussion

This chapter will discuss the results, method and analysis of the study with reflections of the answers of aim and research questions in the study.

In this study, our aim was to explore how some social workers and psychologists experience their collaboration regarding unaccompanied refugee children. Our research questions were to find out how the interviewed professionals describe that there is a

collaboration in their work with unaccompanied refugee children. The second research question was to find out what challenges and possibilities are described by these professionals regarding collaboration between them. From our interviews, we managed to receive detailed and open answers from the three interviewed social workers and the two psychologists.

In order to answer our aim, the participants did describe their experiences of a collaboration regarding unaccompanied refugee children from when they arrive to the municipality and are in need of *placement* and *professional help.*

From our interviews, we received more anticipated challenges than possibilities. This is something we did not expect to find before conducting the interviews, since we did not know how the collaboration was experienced from these professional's view. The possibilities described by the interviewees were that each actor can ask and help each other with their different competence, to help the unaccompanied refugee children in as good way as possible.

For example, when the social worker has issues regarding one young person and are in need of advice in how to go further, he or she can contact a psychologist to receive a meeting for a treatment plan. However, if the collaboration and communication between the two professions were better, the possibilities would increase.

We conducted five interviews to receive as much answers from our questions as possible. Each interview differed from each other with different experiences and knowledge described. Also, some of the interviews were more personal which allowed us to receive a broader view of the collaboration between social workers and psychologists. Since the Crises and Trauma Centre only have been open since September 2016 the answers of collaboration might look different if we would have conducted the interviews later. However, even if the centre had only been open for a few months the professionals were still experienced from earlier workplaces.

7.1 Discussion of method

The municipality chosen for this study were a relatively small city compared to the numbers received of unaccompanied refugee children. If we would have chosen a larger municipality with more unaccompanied refugee children arriving, the answers might

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have been different. We cannot generalize our findings to a wider context and we do not know how the collaboration works in other municipalities or even among other individuals in the chosen municipality. The benefits with our research design are that we received varied and informative answers with our choice of open-ended questions. However, some of the interviewees were relatively new in their work with unaccompanied refugee children which might have lowered the quality of the answers.

Regarding the professional experience of the participants, the results from our interviews could have been broader if they had been working with unaccompanied refugee children for more than three years, and the social workers from the URCU were relatively new in this field of work.

7.2 Discussion of results

Challenges regarding the collaboration between social workers and psychologists were more prominent than we thought they would be. The first challenge described was the waiting periods from the Swedish Migration Board. According to our interviewees, too long waiting periods might result in more problems in recovering from trauma for example, since there has not been a treatment plan made. This leads to the reflection if the number of traumatized refugee youths would be less if a treatment plan could be made even if the young person has not received a residence permit.
Another challenge mentioned in our interviews is the lack of knowledge about each professions competence and responsibility. At the Crises and Trauma Centre, one of the psychologists did not know at all what the social worker's task is, although they are working at the same place, under the same roof. We believe that if there existed more concrete guidelines within each profession, challenges and lack of knowledge would decrease and their areas of responsibility would be clearer. We consider that it is important that each profession follow their guidelines in their work to prohibit confusion that could lead to one profession attain work outside their field of knowledge.

Regarding the unaccompanied refugee children's health, collaboration is essential and can be improved by better collaboration among these actors. With collaborative work, we believe that communication is one key element to achieve that. Unaccompanied refugee children are a vulnerable group and therefore communication and collaboration among those professions involved in the work with helping them is of great importance.

7.3 General consideration on the subject

From the results, we can conclude that in our chosen municipality there seems to exist a collaboration between social workers and psychologists regarding unaccompanied refugee children, mainly when the children, or the ''young persons'' as they are referred to in the interviews, are having issues regarding their health. Also, there seems to be collaboration when there is a request for a sip-meeting, however there is a wish that sip-meetings could occur more often than they are now.

Sip-meetings are described as good to plan for the young person as well as each actor's responsibility in a case; therefore, collaboration could improve during those meetings. We believe that if each actor has continuous sip-meetings at specific times, for example four occasions per year, the collaboration could be better. However, the collaboration is dependent on the need of sip-meetings.

Regarding the challenges in collaboration, one obstacle can be the laws that need to be followed but can also limit the collaborative work. If the psychologists could begin a treatment plan for the young person before the young person received permission to stay in Sweden, it might lower the health issues and challenges in collaboration as well as the health issues of the young persons. Also, it could lower the waiting periods at the different actors which also can lower the workload and the work would be more fluent. The reason of all challenges can be assumed to be because of the lack of communication as a main challenge.

Communication is the base of everything and it is something we are doing all the time, both from positive and negative aspects. If the communication improved between the actors as well as the organisations the other challenges might be fewer.

8. Further research

From our study, we managed to receive a view of what the collaboration between social workers and psychologists can look like in one municipality in Sweden, according to some professionals working there. The chosen municipality is relatively small compared to other municipalities in Sweden and the study would probably present another perspective from another municipality. To receive a broader view of what the collaboration can look like, the study would have to comprise more municipalities with more interviews from social workers and psychologists' experiences of collaboration when working with unaccompanied refugee children.

Furthermore, if possible, the research would have contained more valid information if interviews with the unaccompanied refugee children also would have been conducted. However, that would be an ethical issue of concern since many of the unaccompanied refugee children are under the age of 18.

Concerning our selected previous research, we did not find as much previous research as we hoped for which could have had an impact on the results of the study. Although, the five studies we did find were the most profitable with the same focus regarding collaboration between different actors working with children. Instead of focusing on a quantity of previous research we decided to concentre on the most resembled ones with focus on quality. In that case we managed to connect each previous research in our analysis and results and did not lose the focus of collaboration during the whole study.

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10. Appendices

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Interview questions

Amanda Sundholm and Jennie Krange

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Aim - When do social workers and psychologists collaborate regarding unaccompanied refugee children? – *A qualitative study carried out in one municipality in Sweden.*

· Do you experience a collaboration between social workers and psychologists regarding unaccompanied refugee children?

· Upplever du att det finns något samarbete mellan socionomer och psykologer gällande ensamkommande flyktingbarn?

· If yes, when is there collaboration?

· Om ja, när sker det ett samarbete?

· What are the social worker/psychologists' responsibilities regarding unaccompanied refugee children?

· Vilket ansvar har socionomen/psykologen gällande ensamkommande flyktingbarn?

· Are there any ethical principles of confidentiality as an issue between the two professions regarding unaccompanied refugee children? If yes, when?

· Stöter ni på problem gällande tystnadsplikt mellan de två olika yrkesgrupperna? Om ja, när?

· Do you consider it to be important with a collaboration between social workers and psychologists regarding unaccompanied refugee children? If not, why?

· Anser du att det är viktigt med ett samarbete mellan socionomer och psykologer gällande ensamkommande flyktingbarn? Om inte, varför?

· Could there be a better collaboration between social workers and psychologists in working with refugee children? How?

· Anser du att samarbetet mellan socionomer och psykologer kan bli bättre gällande ensamkommande flyktingbarn? Hur?

·   How can the collaboration between social workers and psychologists look
like?

·   Hur kan samarbetet mellan socionomer och psykologer se ut?

·   What are the possibilities/challenges regarding the collaboration between
social workers and psychologists?

·   Vad ser du/ni för möjligheter/motgångar angående samarbetet mellan
socionomer och psykologer?

·   Do you have any example of when the collaboration between social
workers and psychologists has been useful regarding unaccompanied
refugee children?

·   Har du/ni något exempel på när samarbetet mellan socionomer och
psykologer har fungerat bra gällande ensamkommande flyktingbarn?

·   Do you as a social worker/psychologist believe you reach out to the
children when working with them?

·   Anser du som socionom/psykolog att Ni når ut till barnen när ni arbetar
med dom?

·   How do you believe the children experience the help from social
workers/psychologists?

·   Hur uppfattar ni att barnen upplever den hjälp de blir erbjudna av er?

·   How do you believe social workers and psychologists can benefit from
each other and for the best interest of the children?

·   Hur upplever du att socionomer och psykologer kan dra nytta av varandra
när det kommer barnens bästa?

·   Is there anything else you feel is of importance to attach regarding this
aim?

·   Finns det något du anser viktigt att tillägga gällande detta ämne?