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Thesis title: The Adequacy of Housing in
Emergency Shelters and its Effect of Asylum
Seekers' Well-being

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Summary

Since the refugee influx (2015) in Europe, the Netherlands has been using emergency shelters to mitigate the reception crisis for asylum seekers. The majority of these shelters lack to provide adequate housing for asylum seekers. This research, therefore, aims to assess the adequacy of housing in emergency shelters and its effect on the psychological well-being of asylum seekers. It also examined the role of regulatory environments in shaping the acceptability of housing on the boat. Since this is an existing phenomenon, the research uses a case study strategy to obtain the aspired objective. The boat which has been used to accommodate female asylum seekers, in Rotterdam was used as a case study for this research. Data were collected through interviews with asylum seekers and NGO representatives using semi-structured questionnaires. The findings were analyzed based on the relationship traced from the codings in Atlas.ti, document analysis, and using the current knowledge from the literature.

The findings of the research showed that asylum seekers were subjected to the house rules of the Central Agency for Reception (COA) and the boat itself. This resulted in the emergency shelter being a place with a more controlled environment than other reception centers. The research also encountered that asylum seekers were satisfied with the physical aspects of housing including their privacy, safety, the hygiene of common spaces, location, and with access to basic services and facilities. They were also satisfied with the social life on the boat. However, lack of satisfaction with the inaccessibility of the kitchen and cleaning materials, financial limitation to access transportation, and the weak relation with loved ones were encountered in this research. The house rules aimed to improve the quality of life on the boat were associated with satisfaction with the acceptability of housing, whereas those aimed to carry effective management of accommodation were associated with the lack of acceptability of housing. Regarding psychological well-being, asylum seekers feel more autonomous and competent compared to their previous experiences of living in different reception facilities. They were able to make choices and decisions in their daily life. Besides, they managed to develop skills and accomplish valuable goals from the activities they engaged in. Nonetheless, they faced different challenges that hindered their ability to exercise their autonomy and become competent. The acceptability of housing as shaped by the house rules were prominent in both supporting and abating their psychological well-being.

Keywords: asylum seekers, emergency shelters, acceptability of housing, house rules, psychological well-being.

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Abbreviations

COA	Central Agency for Reception
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
EU	European Union
IND	The Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service
AZC	Asielzoekercentrum (Asylum Seekers' Center)

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction Guidelines

1.1.1 Background Information

During the ‘refugee crisis’ period (2015-2016) the Netherlands had 44,970 and 20,945 asylum applicants respectively (Eurostat, 2021). Besides, the number of asylum seekers increased by 25% by the end of 2021 compared to 2020. These circumstances created the so-called ‘reception crisis’ and it was caused by the exponential increase of demand for accommodations by asylum seekers (Aida, 2022). In response to the high demand, the Central Agency for Reception (COA) arranged partnerships with the local municipalities, local communities, volunteers, and private sectors to provide shelters for asylum seekers (Damen et al., 2021; Geuijen et al., 2020; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). This partnership opens a new window for exploring locally based approaches to accommodate the high number of asylum applicants. In addition to building new reception centers, the locally based approaches mainly used several types of emergency shelters as a means of mitigation for the crisis (COA, 2022). The Dutch Council for Refugees website indicates that recently sports and event halls, boats, parks, pavilions, and former COVID-19 test locations have been used as emergency shelters. Correspondingly, old prisons, empty office buildings, and reserved forests were used to accommodate asylum seekers (Rast & Younes, 2020; Smets et al., 2017; Younes et al., 2021).

Asylum seekers live under several layers of regulatory environments during their application procedures (Katz, 2017; Kreichauf, 2020). This study focused on the house rules that are applied on the reception centers scale, in the Netherlands. The Central Agency for Reception (COA) has a set of house rules that aimed to improve the quality of life in reception facilities and facilitate the manageability of accommodation purposes (see COA, 2017). The acceptability of housing in the emergency shelter is the other focal area of this study. Article 21 of the Refugee Convention entitles asylum seekers to the right to adequate housing (UNHCR, 2010). This right entitled asylum seekers to have access to adequate shelter that meets their basic housing needs (EUPC, 2013). It is expected to be at an acceptable level of quality where asylum seekers are satisfied with the physical, social, financial, and economic components of housing (Angel, 2000; Ayala et al., 2019). Finally, the well-being of asylum seekers is addressed. Here, the well-being of asylum seekers is related to their ability to do well in their daily activities and feel well from the outcomes of their activities to reach the optimal level of health (Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Tov, 2018). On this wise, asylum seekers’ ability to do well and feel well is swayed by the degree of satisfaction with their psychological well-being. Psychological well-being specifically deals with the level of autonomy, competency, and relatedness they have in emergency shelters (Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Ryff, 1989).

The regulatory environments (house rules in this study case) in emergency shelters are new for most asylum seekers and they are characterized by changing their course of action in their daily activities (Kreichauf, 2018a; Plant et al., 1985). The objectives of the house rules also directly addressed their social life and the physical aspects of housing (the accommodation). Thus the study, first, identified the types and the content of house rules that are applicable in the emergency shelter. Then, it addressed how these house rules shape the acceptability of housing (physical and social) in the emergency shelter. In addition, the psychological well-being (autonomy and competency in this study) of asylum seekers is directly associated with the adequacy of housing in the emergency shelter (Anne et al., 2016). This is determined by how the satisfaction with the physical and social acceptability of housing in the emergency shelters supports (not) asylum seekers' ability to exercise their autonomy and be competent (see Dawkins, 2017; Glorius & Schondelmayer, 2020; Rosenberger & Müller, 2020; Tov, 2018). Therefore, the influence of acceptability housing in the emergency shelter which is shaped by the house rules on the psychological well-being of asylum seekers is the last coverage of this study.

1.1.2 Problem Statement

In this regard, the emergency shelters in the Netherlands exhibit many challenges in providing adequate housing for asylum seekers (Rast & Younes, 2020; Smets et al., 2017; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017; Younes et al., 2021). From the physical aspect of the housing perspective, the prior building use of the emergency shelters (e.g. prisons, pavilions, sports halls) was a major source of issues for the inadequate space, overcrowding, and privacy (UNECE, 2021; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). According to Wijkhuijs & Duin (2017), the location of these shelters was distant from city centers and inaccessible for services and facilities. These circumstances affect asylum seekers' daily social life. It created an unsafe environment for asylum seekers to create strong relationships among themselves, with the staff workers as well as the local community (Horst, 2004; Younes et al., 2021). These circumstances affect asylum seekers' physical and social needs for housing and influence the acceptability of housing adequacy in emergency shelters (Ayala et al., 2019). This inadequacy of housing conditions in the emergency shelters, therefore, affects asylum seekers' well-being by impeding their performance in daily activities and social life (Hauge et al., 2017).

In general, this research paper addressed the research gap on the acceptability of adequate housing in emergency shelters (in the case of the boat in Rotterdam) and its specific effect on asylum seekers' psychological well-being. Several social studies addressed the relatedness aspect of psychological well-being. Nevertheless, there is a gap in the literature to address the effect of the acceptability of housing in emergency shelters on asylum seekers' ability to exercise their autonomy and become competent. This study took autonomy (the ability to make choices and decisions independently) and competence (skill development and sense of accomplishment) as dimensions of psychological well-being. Lastly, the study was done on the boat which is being used as an emergency shelter for female asylum seekers. Compared to other types of emergency shelters, using such type of accommodations are a recent approach and they are less studied (see

Rast & Younes, 2020; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). Aside from addressing the research gap related to the boat, the location of the boat (in Rotterdam) and the existing network to collect data were additional establishments to conduct this study. Therefore, this study addressed the gap in the literature by assessing the housing adequacy of the boat and its effect on asylum seekers' well-being.

1.1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to evaluate how the acceptability principle of adequate housing is shaped by the house rules; and how this is influencing asylum seekers' psychological well-being. The house rules are applied to all reception typologies in the Netherlands administered by COA. The study later found that the emergency shelter also had its own house rules. Hence, both are included in this research. The acceptability principle was seen from the physical aspect of housing (location, facilities, and adequacy of space) and asylum seekers' social life within and outside of the boat (Ayala et al., 2019). It was analyzed from the level of housing quality and satisfaction of their housing needs in the emergency shelter (Angel, 2000; Kromhout & Van Ham, 2012). Whereas, the autonomy and competency of asylum seekers are essential for understanding their perceptions of how they are performing and the resulting level of satisfaction from their performance in their daily activities ((Ryff, 1989)Johnston & Finney, 2010; Martela & Sheldon, 2019).

1.1.4 Main Research Questions and Research Sub-questions

1.1.4.1 Main Research Question

How does housing (in) adequacy (from the acceptability perspective), shaped by the house rules in the emergency shelter, affect the (psychological) well-being of asylum seekers in Rotterdam?

1.1.4.2 Research Sub-questions

1. What are the house rules in the emergency shelter?
2. How the house rules in emergency shelters do shape the housing acceptability in the experience of the asylum seekers?
3. How is the acceptability of housing related to asylum seekers' psychological well-being?

1.5 Relevance of the research

The findings from this research are expected to broaden the existing knowledge of housing for vulnerable groups. Many researchers had focused on the physical and social conditions of housing in the Asielzoekercentrum (AZC) also known as asylum seekers' centers (see Nassim et al., 2021; van der Horst, 2004; Klaver, 2016; Daams et al., 2019). Unlikely, the emergency shelters which the COA and local municipalities started to use as accommodation for asylum seekers got less attention in recent studies. These types of accommodations are widely used by most municipalities in the Netherlands and the typologies of the shelters are different (see Rast & Younes, 2020; Younes et al., 2021). As a result, this thesis widens the existing knowledge on

reception centers for asylum seekers and narrows the research gaps mentioned above by studying one of the emergency shelters typology, which is the boat located in Rotterdam.

Moreover, since the use of emergency shelters became the main approach to mitigate the reception crisis, the implication of studying such types of accommodations is important for policymakers to have in-depth knowledge. Sharing the real-time experience of asylum seekers also helps to create awareness about the adequacy of housing conditions in the boats being used as emergency shelters and make interventions for further improvement of their well-being during the staying periods. Therefore, the outcome of this study is expected to be an input for all stakeholders involved in the asylum procedure not only to improve the quality of asylum receptions but also to share the positive outcomes of this thesis with other reception typologies.

Finally, the study could be an initiation for scholars from different fields of study to conduct research that focuses on asylum seeker centers. It can open the door for other researchers to study different types of emergency shelters, and even regular reception centers from the autonomy and competency dimensions of psychological well-being.

Chapter two: Literature review

This chapter of the thesis discusses and explains the main theories and concepts which were used in this study. The literature will mainly focus on three concepts that are pillars for creating a foundation for the study. To create more clarity, this chapter started with the definition of terms. Secondly, it highlighted the controlled environment in emergency shelters. It briefly provides the influence of regulatory environments (house rules in this thesis case) on the behavior of asylum seekers. Third, the concept of adequate housing is discussed comprehensively. This part of the study will explain the characteristics of adequate housing and define the acceptability principle of adequate housing. Finally, the literature review explains the concept of well-being and its relationship with housing in general and in the emergency shelters context as well. To contextualize the case study, the literature review covered the general characteristic of emergency shelters in the Netherlands.

2.1 Terms and definitions

Asylum seeker: According to the UNHCR website, “an asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed”. The Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) identified asylum seekers as people who escape from persecution or violence in their own country related to their nationality, ethnicity, religion, or political beliefs. In short, this study perceived asylum seekers as individuals who requested international protection because of life-threatening conditions in their country of origin and are waiting for a decision.

Refugees: Refugees are those who went through the asylum process and their application was accepted by the concerning governmental body of a certain country (Cohen, 2008). Several studies use the term ‘asylum seeker’ and ‘refugee’ interchangeably (see Katz, 2017; Kreichauf, 2018b; Oesch, 2019). This study argues that using a separate definition for asylum seekers and refugees will help to clarify and address the specific target group of this research, which are the asylum seekers.

Asylum seekers’ centers: According to COA, asylum seekers’ centers are places intended to accommodate asylum seekers thought-out their application process. Terms such as camps or shelters are commonly used to represent asylum seekers’ centers (see Göler, 2020; Katz, 2017; Kourachanis, 2019).

Emergency Shelter: The Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) defined emergency shelters as a type of reception center that is intended for temporary accommodation in the event of a shortage in asylum seekers’ center capacity.

2.2 The Controlled Environment in Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters are characterized by some degree of control over the rights and freedoms of asylum seekers and their capacity to make evocative choices in day-to-day life (UNHCR, 2013).

These restrictions of rights can exist through direct control such as cross-national mobilities through biometric registration, or indirectly by limiting their weekly financial support (Katz, 2017; Kreichauf, 2018a). These imposed controls over the asylum seekers by setting restrictions on their daily life (Bakker, 2014; Grønseth & Thorshaug, 2022). These restrictions could be in terms of creating boundaries where they could or could not go (physical), what to do or not to do (physical and social), and how to do or not to do it (social) (Breen, 2008; Horst, 2004). The physical restrictions in reception facilities are usually applicable in the accommodation separation of female and male asylum seekers, offices for staff workers, and other physical structures (Rast & Younes, 2020; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). The social boundaries are usually sets of rules or regulations that establish the baseline conditions needed to be considered during the formation or in maintaining the existing relationships in reception centers (Younes et al., 2021; Zill et al., 2021).

Acknowledging the influence of the controlling environments in emergency shelters on the acceptability of housing, which is discussed below, is important for this study. Since most asylum seekers do not have the experience to live in any type of reception center, the sets of rules at different scales create an unfamiliar environment (Nassim et al., 2021). This is due to the challenges of accepting the expected behavioral changes in the new controlled environment (Plant et al., 1985). This is due to the high tendency of regulatory environments to shape a person's behavior by “thoughts such as ‘I have to...’ or ‘I should...’ (what we call internally controlling events” respectively (Deci & Ryan 1988, p.1031; Deci et al., 2009; Martela & Sheldon, 2019). Therefore, incorporating the regulatory environment that influences asylum seekers' behavior is important to examine how it also shaped the acceptability of housing in the emergency shelter. To get a closer look at these relationships, the house rules applied in emergency shelters (COA and the boat) are used. These house rules aimed to improve the quality of housing in the emergency shelter (privacy, and safety) and for effective management of accommodation (hygiene, visitors, transfer, and dining time). A detailed explanation of the house rules is presented in chapter four. They are also included in the operationalization table in chapter three.

2.3 Adequate Housing

Article 21 of the Refugee Convention entitles asylum seekers to the right to adequate housing (UNHCR, 2010). Rendering to CESCR, as cited in (Breen, 2008), this right includes adequate privacy, living space, security, basic infrastructure, and adequate location for basic facilities. To fulfill this right, housing should meet the security of tenure, availability of services, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location, and cultural adequacy standards (UNECE, 2021). The five principles of adequate housing, namely, availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability, and adaptability constitute the right to adequate housing (Ayala et al., 2019). This paper will focus on the acceptability principle of adequate housing.

The acceptability principle of adequate housing is people's insights on how housing contributes to satisfying their needs at an acceptable level of quality (Ayala et al., 2019). In other words, it is about the perception of whether one's housing needs are fulfilled at the expected quality or not. Here, housing needs should be seen through "ranges from the most basic need for shelter to locational and space needs to higher-order needs including a sense of belongingness and status [...] influenced by societal norms and individual tastes, lifestyles, and identity" (Kromhout & Van Ham 2012, p.384). Contrary to Niezabitowski (1987), comfort (privacy), safety, sanitation, and social interaction are among the basic needs a person can entertain from housing. Likewise, Guttu et al. (2004) also argue that the range of these needs should be considered six housing needs at a larger scale (neighborhood scale). These are; 1) Health and safety, (2) Social issues, (3) Access to service and facilities, (4) Central location, (5) Space for leisure activities, and (6) Heritage and aesthetic aspects supporting identity and place attachment. Here, the first five fits within the 'basic need for shelter' and the last housing need is compatible with the 'H

igh-order needs' of housing. Moreover, housing quality is the features related to housing that individuals or society give value to (Anne et al., 2016). These qualities depend on the type of connections they built and to the degree they fulfill their needs (Angel, 2000).

To achieve the acceptability of housing, the physical, socio-cultural, economic, and financial objectives of housing should be taken into consideration (Ayala et al., 2019). The physical objectives are associated with how the physical components including the structural soundness of the spaces, the basic infrastructures and services, and their setting are supporting the fulfillment of residents' housing needs (Anne et al., 2016; Ayala et al., 2019; Guttu et al., 2004). Whereas the social objectives address the elements of a housing unit that helps residents to develop healthy relationships in their community life, with the built-up and natural environment (Ayala et al., 2019; Chiu, 2004). Simply put, it is about the contribution of housing to their social cohesion without their values, norms, customs, lifestyle, and other aspects that help them to improve their quality of life (Chiu, 2004; Gooding, 2016). The economic objective mainly signifies access to job opportunities. Whereas the financial objective deals with the affordability of maintenance and management cost of housing and having access to financial means to cover such expenses (Ayala et al., 2019; Ayenew, 2008).

In the context of reception centers, this study argues that all ranges of housing needs should not be expected to fulfill the acceptability of adequate housing in the emergency shelter. There are three main reasons to take into account (see EMN, 2014; Oesch, 2019; Thorshaug, 2015). First, reception centers are meant to be for a temporary stay. Secondly, asylum seekers have limited or sometimes no financial support from the government to satisfy their needs. Finally, asylum seekers are not allowed to work. Thus, their ability to fulfill the high-end housing needs as described by Kromhout & Van Ham (2012) and the economic and financial objectives of acceptable housing explained by Ayala et al. (2019) is subjected to the three conditions. Therefore, the study will focus on the physical and social objectives and acceptability of housing.

In the Netherlands, emergency shelters are commonly known for their inadequacy in both physical and social objectives of the acceptability principle (see Horst, 2004; Rast & Younes, 2020; Younes et al., 2021). The approaches of government policies regarding emergency shelters mainly targeted the provision of beds, sanitation facilities, and food (Leerkes & Scholten, 2016; van Heelsum, 2017). This approach by governments overlooked the basic housing needs and the right to adequate housing of asylum seekers (Horst, 2004). Asylum seekers were living in the highly populated environment and remote locations where basic infrastructures were inaccessible (Kreichauf, 2018a). In addition, lack of privacy, theft, unhygienic living spaces, and exposure to weather (coldness or hotness) were common problems in emergency shelters (Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017).

Moreover, the social cohesion of asylum seekers within and outside of the emergency shelters was very poor (Smets et al., 2017). The overcrowding, unsafe environment, gender-based violations, and lack of privacy are the major problems for the weak relationships among asylum seekers (Nassim et al., 2021; UNECE, 2021; Younes et al., 2021). According to Younes et al. (2021), the strong relationship among asylum seekers is restricted to their ‘strong tie’ (the same family members, ethnicity, friends, or religion) than the ‘weak tie’ (no associations). Their relationship with the local community is known for the experiences of tension, protests, and opposition over several years (Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). The extent of this challenge “shows that 90% of the Dutch would object to the arrival of a large AZC with 500 asylum seekers in the district or municipality and 50% of the Dutch object even to the smaller AZC with 50 asylum seekers” (Geuijen et al. 2020, p.250). However, there were few cases (e.g. Plan Eistien) encountered by Geuijen et al. (2020) that managed to minimize this problem by introducing ‘Co-living’ and ‘Co-learning’ concepts where local communities were organizing events to motivate asylum seekers to socialize and learn the Dutch lifestyle.

Overall, emergency shelters exhibit problems in both the physical and social acceptability of adequate housing. The basic housing needs of asylum seekers were not fulfilled. Consequently, their right to adequate housing was not respected. Therefore this thesis unfolds the acceptability of adequate housing (boat) as influenced by the controlled environment (house rules) in the emergency shelter.

2.4 Understanding the Concept of Well-being

The concept of well-being is broad in that its understanding is highly contextualized in several fields of study (Martela & Sheldon, 2019). Yet, they shared a common ground that “well-being is supposed to be both the ultimate goal of public policy and what individuals strive for” (Fabiola et al. 2013, p.227). In other words, it is a concept that is not fully represented by a single goal or measured by certain criteria, rather its understanding depends on the process of designing policies that aim to improve the physical and mental health of different target groups (Tov, 2018).

For a better understanding of the concept of well-being, several studies approached it from the subjective and functional (Eudaimonic) aspects (Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Vitters, 2016). Subjective well-being deals with both the rational valuation of one's life; and the experienced positive or negative emotions such as satisfaction, happiness, pride, sadness, and worry (Daniel-gonzález et al., 2020; Diener et al., 1999). Functional well-being is the fundamental needs or qualities of a person that contributes to one's psychological growth and empowers individuals to reach a self-actualization level (Deci et al., 2009; Sheldon et al., 2019; Tov, 2018; Vitters, 2016). Thus, for the above authors, well-being is not only the concern of one's experience of satisfaction and emotions but also integrates activities that lead to personal gratification and realization of one's potential.

Taking the above discussion about well-being as a foundation, this paper understood well-being as the '*psychological needs*' of individuals that enabled them to reach the stage of "*both doing well and feeling well*" (Martela & Sheldon 2019, p.464). The notion of '*feeling well*' align with subjective well-being and it is about the evaluation of feelings and emotions related to individual needs and arises after the living experience from one's inside (Deaton, 2008). The concept of '*doing well*' is an important aspect of functional well-being that is derived from one's values, motivations, and practices that lead to achieving certain goals to '*feeling well*' (Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Ryan & Martela, n.d.; Sheldon et al., 2019).

The '*psychological needs*' of individuals, also used as '*psychological well-being*' by Ryff (1989), are the fundamental needs that are core elements of psychological well-being, where their fulfillment most likely leads to '*do well*' and '*feel well*' in their life (Martela & Sheldon, 2019). The illustration by Martela & Sheldon (2019), as seen in figure 1, is important for an in-depth understanding of the relationship between those three components namely; '*psychological needs*', '*doing well*', and '*feeling well*' of well-being.

2.4.1 Psychological Well-being

According to Martela & Sheldon (2019), the basic dimensions of the psychological needs of a person that determines to do well and feel well are autonomy, competency, and relatedness. They also take into account 'other' dimensions to be considered depending on the relevance for studying the psychological needs from different contexts (see figure.1). These three dimensions fall under the umbrella of Ryff's (1989) six dimensions of psychological well-being namely: (1) self-acceptance, (2) positive relation to other people, (3) autonomy, (4) environmental mastery, (5) life-meaning and (6) personal growth.

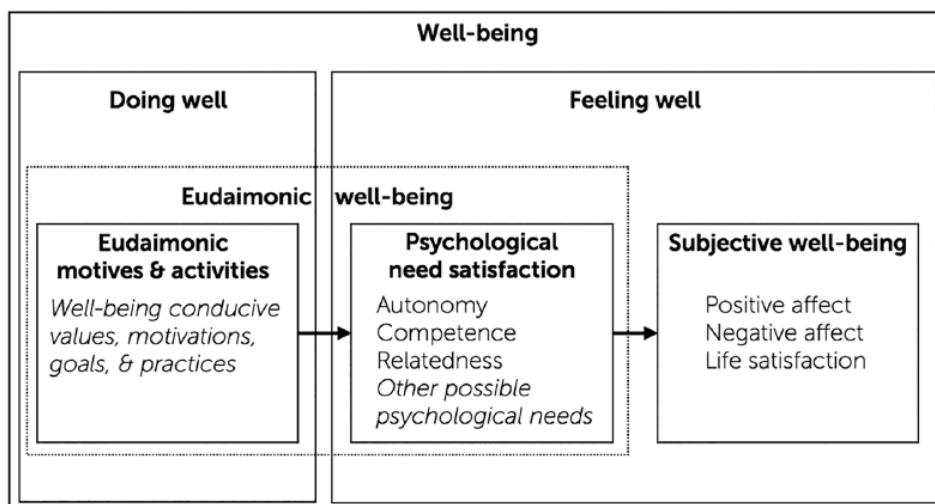
As Johnston & Finney (2010) argue, both Martela & Sheldon (2019) and Ryff (1989) shared common grounds in dimensions of; '*autonomy*'; '*relatedness*' with the '*positive relation to other people*'; and '*competency*' with '*environmental mastery*' and '*personal growth*' dimensions. To avoid ambiguity in the use of terminology (psychological need and psychological well-being), this paper further used the term '*psychological well-being*'.

For Ryff (1989) *autonomy* is the ability of a person to express themselves and become independent. The researcher argues that this definition remains broad and could be interpreted from several perspectives. In the context of this study, autonomy is the ability of individuals to satisfy their needs by exercising their freedom of choice and decisions in their daily actions (Chevrier & Lannegrand, 2021; Johnston & Finney, 2010). A person’s freedom of choice is represented by their ability to make self-endorsed choices that represent their interest (Adams et al., 2017; Danyliuk, 2018; Deci et al., 2009). The freedom to make decisions indicates one’s ability to make conscious and continuous decisions without external pressure or influence (Dawkins, 2017; Raz, 1986).

Competency is the second dimension that refers to the ability of individuals to develop new skills and a sense of accomplishment in the activities they engaged in ((Ryff, 1989; Chevrier & Lannegrand, 2021; Johnston & Finney, 2010). In this regard, a person’s ability to learn a new skill is highly related to their capacity to adapt to a new environment and pursue those skills which are valuable for their future life (Deci et al., 2009; Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Ryff, 1989). Simultaneously, their study designated that a person’s accomplishment is determined by their effectiveness in using their potential while doing valuable activities to gain the desired outcome from these valuable activities.

The *relatedness* dimension is explained based on one’s positive relationship with others and the satisfaction resulting from the sense of connectedness, received attention, and shared empathy, as well as the feeling of belongingness (Deci et al., 2009; Ryff, 1989). Since the relatedness dimension has been addressed by many housing and social studies, this study addressed the autonomy and competence dimensions of psychological well-being (see Chiu, 2004; Dixon, 2013; Nulhaqim et al., 2021).

Figure 1: understanding and identifying the components of well-being.



Source: Martela & Sheldon (2019, p.464)

2.5 Housing as a Tool for Exercising Well-being

As discussed above, the acceptability principle of adequate housing is determined by the ability of the physical, social, economic, and financial objectives to help dwellers to gratify their housing needs (Angel, 2000; Ayala et al., 2019; Kromhout & Van Ham, 2012; Niezabitowski, 1987). There is also an argument that “the satisfaction of housing needs promotes individual well-being to the extent that the satisfaction of needs enables one to more successfully formulate and pursue one’s goals” (Dawkins 2017, p.430). This indicates that the ability of a person to exercise their autonomy, competency, and relatedness dimensions are associated with higher satisfaction with housing needs and also leads to the adequacy of housing conditions to be acceptable by the dwellers.

Based on the above discussion, the psychological well-being of asylum seekers is highly affected by the acceptability of adequate housing conditions in emergency shelters. Here, the acceptability of the emergency shelters is determined by asylum seekers’ ability to develop a place attachment through two basic conditions. 1) the preferred level of accommodation quality and their actual housing experience in the emergency shelters; 2) their relationship with other people (Anne et al., 2016; Hauge et al., 2017). As explained by Anne et al. (2016), asylum seekers’ preference for accommodation quality is highly subjected to social attributes, personality, and values. Furthermore, Hauge et al. (2017) implied that the quality of the physical environment of emergency shelters is not only important for building emotional attachment with the place, but also facilitates their daily social life and creates a foundation for the acceptability of the adequacy of emergency shelters.

The prospects of living in emergency shelters where the adequacy of housing conditions reaches an acceptable level are crucial for asylum seekers to meet their psychological well-being (Anne et al., 2016; Dawkins, 2017; Hauge et al., 2017). As explained above this is due to the following three reasons: a) housing is an important instrument to enhance asylum seekers’ autonomy by allowing them to exercise their choices and decisions independently (Dawkins, 2017; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017); b) emergency shelters are a medium augment relatedness by facilitating asylum seekers to engage in social activities and to practice cultural traditions (Anne et al., 2016; Hauge et al., 2017); and c) emergency shelters for asylum seekers are the base for building competency by forming suitable environment to developing new skills and achieving their goals (Katz, 2017). For more clarification, asylum seekers’ competency should be considered from achieving simple daily plans (e.g. going somewhere) to future-oriented goals (e.g developing skills that enhance their future lives) (Geuijen et al., 2020). As Geuijen et al. (2020) argue, regardless of the acceptance or rejection of asylum seekers' applications for legal protection, all types of shelters should make sure asylum seekers are equipped with the necessary skills that can help them to achieve their future goals and to be productive citizens.

2.6 Emergency Shelters in the Netherlands

The refugee crisis that occurred from 2015 to 2016 was the period when emergency shelters were intensively used to accommodate a large number of asylum applicants by the Dutch authorities (van Heelsum, 2017). Due to this crisis, COA starts working in collaboration with municipalities, NGOs, private sectors, and public organizations to explore locally-based solutions for establishing emergency shelters (Damen et al., 2021; Geuijen et al., 2020).

When new emergency shelters are needed, COA consults municipalities and public and private organizations that have a strong capacity and willingness to accept asylum seekers in emergency shelters (Daams et al., 2019). According to Daams et al (2019), COA makes a partnership with them when these five criteria are fulfilled. First, the location of emergency shelters within or near large municipalities is preferable. Secondly, there should be good access to services, facilities, and well-maintained shelters. Third, a closer location to IND services is also preferable. Fourth, in the case of an influx, the flexibility of contact extension to accommodate more asylum seekers to narrow the mismatch gap is required. Finally, the rent cost of emergency shelters has to be affordable. In addition to these criteria, COA's requirement includes the presence of basic facilities such as water, electricity, internet, and others. The ratio of the area of the shelter to the maximum hosting capacity of asylum seekers and the contract period (minimum of 6 months with possibilities to extension) are other requirements COA took in to consideration.

Among the five criteria, the first three are associated to have a direct effect on the acceptability of housing for asylum seekers. As discussed above, the physical acceptability of adequate housing is associated with the location, space, services, and facilities of housing units (Ayala et al., 2019). In this regard, the criteria addressed the location aspect of acceptability of adequate housing in respect of proximity to city centers and easy access to IND service.

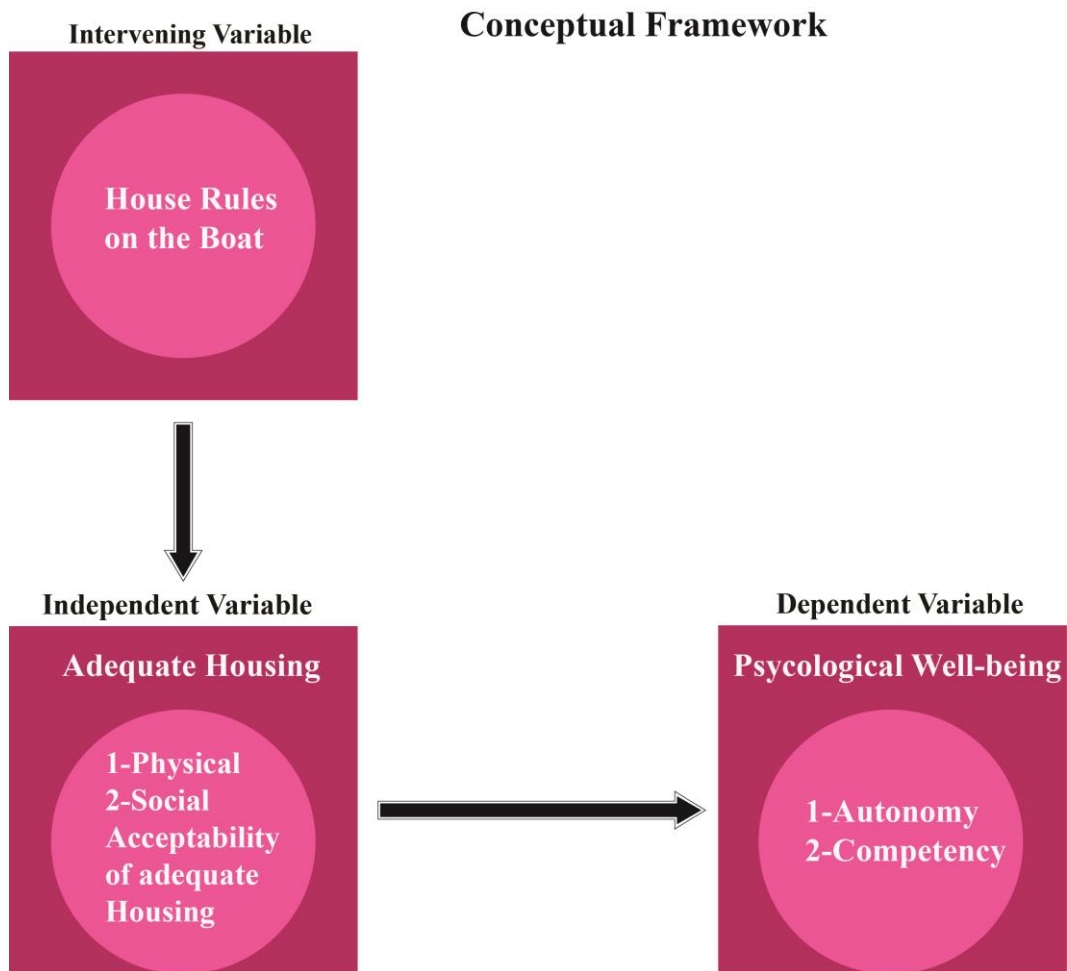
As of the data collection period, the COA website mentioned that different buildings and locations have been used as emergency shelter alternatives to accommodate 43,000 asylum seekers in the Netherlands. The semi-permanent housing units (Emmen), former prisons (Hoogeveen), monasteries (Baexem), boats (Zandaam, and Rotterdam) barracks (Gilze), or caravans (Saint Anna Parish) were some of the typologies used as emergency shelters in the Netherlands. Location-wise, the emergency shelters were situated in the middle of the forest (Oisterwijk), on boats (Zandaam), inside the city (Utrecht), or in a village (For real).

2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework seen in figure (2) shows the main concepts that appear in the research questions and their relation. It is a simplified model that illustrates the type of variables used in the study. The house rules in the emergency shelter are used as an intervening variable. Its influence on the acceptability of adequate housing is discussed. Whereas the acceptability principle of housing is the independent variable of the study. As discussed above, the physical and socio-cultural acceptability of adequate housing by Ayala et al. (2019) is used to address the

independent variable. Finally, the psychological well-being of asylum seekers is the dependent variable of the study. It is explained in terms of how it was affected by the acceptability of adequate housing as shaped by the house rules in the emergency shelter. The autonomy and competency dimensions are adapted from both Martela & Sheldon's (2019) model of well-being and Ryff's (1989) six dimensions of psychological well-being.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework



Source: illustrated by the researcher

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter covers the strategies used while conducting the research. It also addressed the operationalization of each variable which helped to ask the right questions during the interviews and to answer the research questions. The types of data collected for discussion and analysis, the sampling process, and the tools applied for analysis purpose is also included in the chapter. Last but not least, the limitations of the research and the validity and reliability of the study are described below.

3.1 Research Strategy

This research used a case study strategy to answer the research questions. This strategy is suitable to study existing phenomena and significant to guide the analysis by navigating through the real-life experience of asylum seekers living on the boat which is being used as emergency shelters (Rebolj, 2017; Van Thiel, 2014). Accordingly, it is a relevant research strategy to study and have an in-depth understanding of the effect of housing adequacy conditions on asylum seekers' well-being.

The case study was done in Rotterdam city. The municipality of Rotterdam was using boats as an emergency shelter for asylum seekers. This created a suitable environment for data collection (time-wise) and a better connection with asylum seekers to share their experiences. At the time of conducting the interview, the number of asylum seekers who were accommodated on the women's boat was 65. Each asylum seeker was provided with one room that has a bed, study desk, and bathroom that has its toilet and shower. Each room has an area of approximately 9m² (including the lobby and bathroom). According to the interviewees, the boat can accommodate up to 100 people. There was a large restaurant that serves as a common space and a dining room for asylum seekers. Asylum seekers also used it as a place to spend time together and do private and group activities.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

This study followed the qualitative research method. It is a pertinent research method that the "primarily concerned with understanding human beings' experiences in a humanistic, interpretive approach" (Jackson et al. 2007, p.21). To do so, the data needed for this paper were gathered through primary qualitative data collection through semi-structured interview questions for asylum seekers and NGO workers. Using semi-structured interview questions helped interviewees to share detailed information about their experience or opinion on the subject matter and also give room for the researcher to ask additional questions when needed (Van Thiel, 2014). These questions were structured to grasp the necessary information from respondents to answer the research questions. They were formulated based on the discussed theories and concepts from the literature and the operationalization.

3.3 Sampling

The sample selection process targeted all possible parties involved in the emergency shelter that is relevant to the case study. The emergency shelter (boat) was intended to shelter mainly over 18 years old single women or married women who arrived without their partners in the Netherlands. Relatively, a very small number of married couples with no child were also accommodated on the boat. Despite the frequent relocation of asylum seekers living on the boat, their country of origin was found to be diverse. Yet asylum seekers from Syria and Iran took the large population. Therefore, the sampling process for asylum seekers was focused on women (except the married couples) above 18 years old with no specification of religion, country, or ethnic background.

The sampling for the data collection method took place through the snowballing method. Asylum seekers are vulnerable groups with a high possibility of traumatized experiences (Geuijen et al., 2020; Lubbers et al., 2006; Ravn et al., 2020). Therefore, it required special attention in selecting interviewees for the study. The connection made with a current asylum seeker that lives in the emergency shelter (boat) in Rotterdam helped to access other interviewees. This study included the opinions and living experiences of seven women asylum seekers and two (former and current) activity organizers from the non-profit organization called MANO. The researcher managed to cover 10% of the total number of asylum seekers living on the boat (see table 5). To reinforce the analysis, this thesis included document analysis of the house rules in the emergency shelter.

Table 4. Respondents from the NGO

Number	Name	Gender	Organization	Position	Approach
1	Ruba	Female	MANO	Former Activity Organizer	Direct contact with the organization
2	Mais	Female	MANO	Current Activity Organizer	

Table 5. The profile of asylum seeker respondents

Number	Name	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education	Duration of staying on the boat in months
1	Hayat	Female	31	Married	Masters	6
2	Laura	Female	55	Single	Masters	4
3	Zahra	Female	32	Single	Bachelor	4
4	Nadiya	Female	-	Single	Masters	3
5	Hassane	Female	35	Single	Masters	2
6	Sara	Female	34	Married	Bachelor	2
7	Medina	Female	19	Single	High school	6

3.4 Data Analysis Method

The study used the Atlas.ti software to conduct the data analysis phase. It is computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) that helps to “read, annotate, code, visualize, and interpret in one space within reach of our data..... to ‘make visible’ our analysis process in ways that it would not have been possible otherwise” (Paulus & Lester 2016, p.g 409). The operationalization table was the base to execute the coding process. It was a compatible tool to opt for the collected qualitative data and observe the relationship between variables. It was vital to apply an iterative coding approach to visualize the level of influence among the variables and capture the network pattern of concepts (Hwang, 2008).

Before using Atilas.ti, the interviews with all respondents were transcribed and used as input documents for the software. Following, the simplified indicators and sub-indicators were used for coding the collected data to measure the variables. The application of open coding, query tools, and co-occurrence tables was useful to identify the correlation between variables and their implication to answer the research questions. The findings from the analysis were also discussed by comparing them with document analysis and in relation to the concepts from the literature.

3.5 Operationalization

Table 1. Operationalization of the intervening variable

Context Variable	Definition	Rules	Indicators
House rules in Emergency reception centers (MyCOA, 2022; COA, 2017). https://www.mycoa.nl/en/content/rights-obligations	These are sets of rules that COA and the administration of the boat applied in all types of asylum centers aiming for safety, quality of life, and manageability in such accommodation.	Rules that aimed to improve the quality of life on the boat (Safety, and privacy)	Discrimination, intimidation, and violence against religion and belief (Political preference, race, gender & sexual orientation)
			Drugs, alcohol, and weapons
		Rules that aimed for effective management of accommodation	Dining time
			Visitors
			Leaving the key in the reception area
			Cleaning (communal & immediate area around)
Transfer			

Table 2. Operationalization of the independent variable

Independent Variable	Sub-Variables	Indicators	Sub-indicators	Data type
Acceptability of housing (Ayala et al., 2019; UNECE, 2021)	Acceptability of physical condition	Adequate space	Adequacy of the total number of asylum Adequacy of seekers on the boat	Qualitative
			Number of people per room	
			Safety (fire, weather, natural disaster, and unwelcome intruders)	
			Privacy (the ability to do personal activities without being disturbed, pressured, or watched by external forces) (Angel, 2000)	
			Hygiene (the tidiness of private and common spaces)	
		Location	Proximity center	
			Proximity to employment	
		Facilities	Accessibility to water, electricity, heating, lighting, internet	
			Accessibility of sanitation and kitchen facility	
			Accessibility of public facilities (Transportation, health, education, and recreational facilities)	
	Social Acceptability	Acceptability of interaction within the boat	The presence of respect, tolerance, and professionalism in relationships among asylum seekers, COA workers, and staff members of the boat.	
		Acceptability of interaction outside the boat	Continuous relationships with family, friends, loved ones; & Social cohesion with the local community	
		Discrimination	Discrimination experience based on race, ethnicity, status, gender, or any other form	
		Nuisance	Feeling coerced or discomfort with a certain condition, activity, or relationship (Liu et.al, 2018)	

Table 3. Operationalization of the dependent variable

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Indicators	Sub-indicators	Measurement
Well-being (Psychological well-being)	Autonomy (Martela & Sheldon, 2019)	The ability to make choices and decisions independently (Johnston & Finney, 2010; Chevrier & Lannegrand, 2021))	The ability to make self-endorsed choices (Adams et al., 2017) A conscious decision from given alternatives (Dawkins, 2017; Raz, 1986)	Qualitative
	Competency (Martela & Sheldon, 2019)	Development of new skills (Johnston & Finney, 2010; Chevrier & Lannegrand, 2021)	Learning skills that are important for adapting to the new environment (Deci et al., 2009; Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Geuijen et al., 2020)	
	Sense of accomplishment (Johnston & Finney, 2010; Chevrier & Lannegrand, 2021)	A person's ability to produce the desired outcome or achieve their goals from the activities they engaged in (Dawkins, 2017; Deci et al., 2009; Martela & Sheldon, 2019)		

3.6 Validity and Reliability

This research was conducted based on one case study (the boat) using a qualitative research methodology. Hence, the findings of this research are difficult to reach generalization based on the data collected from one case study. The experience of other asylum seekers that lived in different typologies of emergency shelters as explained in the literature is unlikely to be the same. Therefore the external validity of this qualitative research has limitations in providing external generalization (see VanTheil, 2014).

Since the interest of this research was to include “ people’s belief, experience, and meaning systems from the perspective of the people”, the internal validity is considered to be high (H.I.L Brink 1993. p.35). For instance, some of the respondents reviewed the transcribed document to review the collected data. This measure significantly enriched the validity of the research. The reliability of the research was achieved by capturing all necessary data using high-quality interview recordings, accurate transcriptions, and taking additional notes during the field observation. The collected data were also iteratively coded and the results were stored using Atlas.ti. This enhanced the consistency of the reliability by tracing back the patterns, changes, and relationships of data.

To increase the validity and reliability of this thesis, the researcher takes into account the four main sources of biasedness; namely the researcher, respondents, the social and environmental context, and during the analysis phase (H.I.L Brink, 1993). My involvement in voluntary activities (as translator and event facilitator) with NGOs that work with asylum seekers, and the close relationship I have with Tigray Community members who live in several reception centers was crucial to be familiar with the living experience of asylum seekers. This was important to

avoid making assumptions and misinterpretations of the collected data throughout the research phase. In addition, the trust-building process with respondents (through snowballing method) and clarifying the intention of the research brings motivation for asylum seekers to openly share their opinion. Moreover, the interviews also considered the respondents' interests in choosing places (on the boat and public spaces), times, dates, and conditions (alone or with the presence of another person). Such consideration was also important to openly share their opinion. Finally, the researcher used interviews, field observation, and document analysis to triangulate the data.

3.7 Limitation

The main challenge experienced while conducting the study was during the data collection stage. After the 2015-2016 refugee crisis, several reception centers were closed and emergency shelters were merely used to accommodate asylum seekers (Rast & Younes, 2020). However, the COA website showed that in recent years, the number of asylum seekers has increased drastically and so does the need for more reception centers. It also indicated that such challenges led to the overcrowding of most reception centers and the frequency of asylum seekers' transfer from an emergency shelter to another emergency shelter or to AZCs. Due to this, several asylum seekers were transferred to other reception locations. This condition highly affected the ability of the researcher to reach the intended sample size through the snowballing method. Several connections were transferred to different locations which made it impossible to conduct the interviews. Aspiring to minimize this challenge, the research also attempt to include the boat that was accommodating male asylum seekers and conduct a comparison study. However, the lack of sufficient research period was a bottleneck issue for establishing connections and make the interviews.

Similarly, the workload of COA workers and the criteria for making an interview with COA staff members required a long bureaucratic procedure. Hence, it was difficult to conduct an interview and include their expert opinions and perceptions in this study. In addition, the restrictions for taking photo footage of the boat limit the research to rely on the interview data, document analysis, and field observation notes (in-person visit of the common spaces). The research also has a limitation in addressing the higher scale of regulations, such as national level, European Union, and global scale regulations about asylum seekers. it only considers the house rules of COA and the boat. thus, the influence of a higher level of regulation on the acceptability of housing is not considered. Finally, the case study was done on a boat intended for female asylum seekers. The findings of this thesis lack a 'gender-sensitive' analysis.

Chapter Four: Results and Analysis

This chapter covers the acceptability of adequate housing shaped by the house rules in the emergency shelter and its effect on asylum seekers' psychological well-being. It starts by reviewing the existing house rules in the emergency shelter. The next section covers the findings on the acceptability of adequate housing on the boat and how the house rules shaped the findings are discussed. Following this is about the autonomy and competency aspects of asylum seekers' psychological well-being. This section also explains how the acceptability of adequate housing affects their autonomy and competency.

4.1 The House Rules in the Emergency Shelter

COA has house rules for all types of reception facilities (COA, 2022). These rules are implemented only on the asylum reception centers at national scale. In addition to COA's house rules, asylum seekers were required to comply with the house rules of the boat. According to the respondents, the house rules of the boats were similar to the rules used when it was operating as a hotel. Both house rules have two main objectives. The first one aims to enhance the quality of life on the boat. This house rule is focused on the safety and privacy of asylum seekers. Here, the safety rule disallowed any sort of discrimination, intimidation, and violation; based on asylum seekers' religion, beliefs, political views, race, gender, or another basis. The house rule related to safety on the boat also forbids asylum seekers from public drunkenness and possession of illegal drugs and weapons. Meanwhile, the privacy rules expect asylum seekers to be quiet between 22:00-8:00. It also prohibits all involved parties (asylum seekers, volunteers, visitors, and staff workers) from taking photos, filming videos, and recording sounds without asking for consent.

The second house rule specifically attributed to the manageability of accommodation. The manageability objective is a set of instructions that aims for proper utilization of the accommodation and time usage on the boat. In this regard both house rules have differences. First, Under COA's house rule, asylum seekers are responsible for the hygiene of the accommodation (the rooms and immediate hallways). But, on the boat, the hygiene task is done by the housekeepers (employees of the hotel). Secondly, the house rule of COA allowed visitors from 8:00 -22:00, but the house rules of the boat do not allow any visitors at all. Third, whenever asylum seekers want to go outside, they leave the key and register their names on the reception of the boat. Whenever asylum seekers want to go outside, they leave the key and register their names on the reception of the boat. COA's rule on the other hand mandates asylum seekers to make duty reports once a week (assigned date by COA). Fourth, COA has a house rule to transfer asylum seekers between rooms or to other reception centers when it is necessary. Finally, asylum seekers who live on the boat must attend the allocated dining times; that is 8:00-9:00 for breakfast, 12:00-13:00 for lunch, and 18:00-19:00 for dinner. The food is served in the restaurant section of the boat and no one is allowed to take their rooms. COA provides kitchen facilities for most reception centers (AZCs). In the case of emergency shelters, if kitchen facilities do not exist, COA serves them food according to the time set (SEM, 2017). The house

rule related to the transfer of asylum seekers was the only COA's house rule implemented on the boat. The remaining house rules were taken from the house rules of the boat.

4.2 Acceptability of Adequate Housing Shaped by the House Rules in the Emergency Shelter

Article 17 of the European Union directive for standards of asylum reception centers deals with the general rules on the material reception conditions of such centers. Article 17 (1) briefly stated the role of states in the provision of 'adequate living standards for asylum seekers' without establishing detain specifications (see EUPC, 2013). The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights report on the other hand argues the provision of shelter should be neither limited to having a roof over the head nor seen as a commodity (OHCHR, 1992). The report stated that it should also be adequate, and provided a detailed interpretation:

“Adequate shelter means ... adequate privacy, adequate space, adequate security, adequate lighting and ventilation, adequate basic infrastructure and adequate location with regard to work and basic facilities - all at a reasonable cost” (OHCHR 1992, p.2). The researcher argues, the adequacy of shelter in the context of emergency shelters should also include the adequacy of social interaction also referred to as “co-living” (Geuijen et al., 2020). Hence, the core concepts for the discussion and analysis of the physical and social acceptability of housing are based on the acceptability principle of adequate housing and adequate housing from a human right perspective.

4.2.1 Satisfaction with the adequate space

At the time of the interview, there were 65 female asylum seekers sheltered on the boat. Each asylum seeker was living in a private room that includes a bathroom. Putting this in mind, the privacy of asylum seekers is covered first. The next focus of this section is on the safety and security of the boat. The last content is on the discussion on hygiene and sanitation conditions of the emergency shelter. The role of house rules in shaping the findings on adequate space is also included.

4.2.1.1 Privacy

All respondents were very satisfied with their privacy on the boat. According to the respondents, because of their privacy, they feel the most comfort when they spend their time in their room. They agreed that they could do personal activities with freedom on the boat. This includes working, studying, entertaining, using the bathroom at any time, and praying without any disturbance. The fact that they have their room and bathroom for themselves was a common reason associated with their satisfaction with their privacy. When it comes to the role of living in private rooms for the privacy of asylum seekers, Hassane said;

“At first, I was very afraid. Because I didn't know any situation. I just heard where we are going to go was a ship [...]. When I arrived here and see the people and the situation I was very

satisfied. It was very good. Because they give us our own space. It is Privacy.” (Hasaane, female, 35 years old, 5 months on the boat).

All respondents were transferred from different reception facilities to the boat. They mentioned that they were living in a shared room with one or more asylum seekers. They compared their privacy in both accommodations and explained the differences. The respondents said they do not have to wait for their roommate to leave to change their clothes or put on earphones to watch a movie or listen to music. They also stopped going outside to talk on the phone and lock their belongings inside a locker as they used to while they were in their previous shared accommodation. Hence this avoids the challenges of disputes among asylum seekers usually occurring in “a key characteristic of collective forms of asylum accommodation”, which is shared rooms (Zill et al. 2021, p.5; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017).

Overall, the satisfaction with their privacy gave them the freedom to do different activities at any time without the fear of being seen, disturbed, or judged. As a result, asylum seekers’ privacy as shaped by the ‘privacy’ house rule increased their satisfaction.

4.2.1.2 The Safety of Asylum Seekers

Most interviewees felt unsafe when they arrived on the boat for the first time. The main reason was their unfamiliarity with living on a boat. According to the interviewees, the movement of the boat during windy weather was the main reason for them feeling dizzy spending sleepless nights and feeling unsafe on the boat. Nevertheless, through time, they managed to adapt to the situation and became more familiar with it. Nadiya was one of the respondents who had several years of experience living on a ship. She explained their safety situation;

“As you see the ship is on the canal. It is a close-ended channel. We have a bridge here. The ship is surrounded by buildings. They control the wind. This minimizes the movement of the ship [...] This is the reason this ship is safe and stable.” (Nadiya, female, 3 months on the boat)

All respondents were satisfied with the protection from fire, theft, and unwelcome intruders. Their main reasons were, first, the boat has security personnel who works for 24 hours. They also make sure asylum seekers comply with the house rules such as possession of weapons or any sort of conflicts and confrontations from happening. Secondly, the boat has a security camera in every lobby of the boat. Finally, the boat has fire extinguishers and smoke detectors installed. They also had training sessions about safety measures during a fire emergency. They also had training sessions about safety measures during a fire emergency. Additionally, the interviewees also shared common grounds regarding the safety situations around the neighborhood. They were able to walk around at any time of the day without having fear of being robbed or any other crimes. These conditions are not common to experience in other emergency shelters where their prior building use was for non-residential activities (see Rast & Younes, 2020).

Generally, the asylum seekers were satisfied with the experience of the safety conditions on the boat as well as in the surrounding neighborhood. The house rules of the boat and COA were important in shaping asylum seekers' satisfaction with their safety.

4.2.1.3 Hygiene and sanitation

The hygiene and sanitation condition of the boat was the other aspect of the housing adequacy that most of the respondents agreed to be satisfactory. The respondents commonly mentioned five main reasons for their satisfaction; first, they have a private bathroom. For instance, Medina said,

“Having a bathroom by yourself was a blessing. Because before I was in a shared bathroom in Budel with a whole floor and it was really dirty. You cannot clean it because it always gets dirty.” (Medina, female, 19 years old, 6 months on the boat).

Thus, access to a private bathroom was important for them to bypass the unhygienic problem raised by sharing bathrooms (Zill et al., 2021). Secondly, they were provided with personal hygiene materials (e.g. soap, shampoo, towels, bed sheets, and toilet paper) regularly. Third, asylum seekers have access to free laundry services on the boat. This helped them to maintain the hygiene of their clothes. Finally, asylum seekers were satisfied with the hygiene conditions of the common spaces such as the restaurant, kitchen, and ‘hangout spaces’. According to the respondents, the housekeepers were responsible to sustain the hygiene of common rooms as well as the bed sheets and towels. As a result, the house rules were crucial in shaping asylum seekers' satisfaction with the hygiene conditions of the boat.

Despite the satisfaction with various aspects, the respondent expressed two critical concerns. First, asylum seekers do not have any access to cleaning equipment for their bathrooms to clean daily. They had to wait for the schedule of housekeepers to get the room cleaned. The second challenge was related to the cleaning service itself. Some respondents reported that sometimes the way housekeepers do the cleaning task was unsatisfactory. Zahara stated:

“They also don't use a lot of materials to clean the bathroom [...] they use the same sponge for all the bathrooms. It is better if you have the material to do that” (Zahara, female, 32 years old, 4 months on the boat)

As a result, both the inaccessibility of hygiene materials and the way housekeepers clean their bathrooms led to dissatisfaction. This shows the negative satisfaction with the hygiene of the bathrooms is shaped by the house rules of the boat.

Generally, asylum seekers were satisfied with access to a private bathroom, personal hygiene materials, tidiness of the common spaces, and laundry service. Yet, the inaccessibility of cleaning materials and the way housekeepers cleaned the bathrooms were associated with dissatisfaction with the hygiene on the boat. In both scenarios, the role of the boat's house rule was vital in shaping their positive and negative satisfaction.

4.2.2 Location

All respondents were satisfied with the location of the boat. Unlike many reception centers they previously lived in, this emergency shelter was located in the city center. The boat was located in Feijenoord district of Rotterdam. Asylum seekers believed that the location of the boat was not common for asylum reception facilities in the Netherlands and they considered it ‘luck’ to live in such a location. It helped them to easily access open markets, shops, churches, and mosques, and to involve in different public events and carnivals. Laura said,

“I value the fact that I am here on the boat. We may be in one of the best spots in Rotterdam.....the location is perfect. It makes it easier to access everything.” (Laura, female, 55 years old, 4 months on the boat)

Hayat also compared the location with her previous experience of living in another reception center and said;

“In my previous experience of living in a shelter, I had to walk 30 or 40 minutes to find a shop. I feel discouraged to go out because when I go out and look around, there is nothing to see. You do not see people or any activities” (Hayat, female, 31 years old, 6 months on the boat)

Asylum seekers who volunteer in different activities and NGOs were also satisfied with the accessibility of workplaces. Being in the city center helped them to explore more options for voluntary work and find activities in their interest. The NGO that organizes activities for asylum seekers also mentioned that the proximity to the city center makes it more accessible for all workers. It also opened more opportunities to explore diverse types of activities.

To summarize, asylum seekers were satisfied with the location of the boat. It helped them to access different activities and different places within a walking distance. Its location was also accessible for NGOs and other workers. Most emergency shelters are in remote areas and abandoned places where activities outside the shelters are almost non-existent (Katz, 2017; Kreichauf, 2018b; Younes et al., 2021).

4.2.3 Access Services and Facilities

This section of the thesis covered the acceptability of adequate housing for access to services and facilities perspectives in the emergency shelter. the accessibility of basic facilities, the inaccessibility of kitchen facilities, and the accessibility of public facilities would be disclosed.

4.2.3.1 Access to basic facilities

All interviewees claimed to have good access to basic facilities such as water, electricity, and internet service. These facilities are located inside their rooms as well as in common spaces. However, Some of the interviewees complained about their inadequate access to natural lighting inside their rooms. Due to the orientation of the boat (the way it was docked), only half of the asylum seekers’ rooms have access to natural light through their windows. The windows of the

rest on the other hand were against the wall. Due to this, asylum seekers who live in such rooms felt they have relatively very confined rooms compared to the others. *Zahra said,*

“When I came here I had a small room and it was really close (narrow). I have this phobia of sitting in a closed place [...] but now I have another room. The window is towards the sea. So I can have a view at least.” (Zahra, female, 32 years old, 4 months on the boat)

According to the interview, among the available 100 rooms around 25% of them have lighting problems. Yet, most of the rooms are unoccupied. Hence, most asylum seekers do not have the same problems.

Largely, the accessibility of basic facilities was found to be satisfactory. Even so, some of the asylum seekers do not have adequate natural lighting. The inadequacy of lightning was also a common problem in some of the accommodation types used as emergency shelters; such as prisons and halls as discussed by Wijkhuijs & Duin (2017 and Younes et al. (2021) respectively.

4.2.3.2 Inaccessibility of Kitchen

According to Ruba, the NGO worker, the boat was equipped with a large kitchen. But it was decided not to be used by asylum seekers for ‘safety reasons’. COA agreed with the private owners of the boat (hotel) to provide food for the asylum seekers at specific dining times. Thus, after the function changed from hotel to emergency shelter, the chiefs and waitresses remained working on the boat. The function of the restaurant space also remained to serve as a dining place.

All respondents shared their dissatisfaction with not having access to the kitchen. First, all interviewees stated that they had a variety of dishes served especially during lunch and dinner time that most do not align with their cultural cuisine. *Medina said,*

“They give us different foods. Most of the time it is Dutch food and I do not like Dutch food. What left is rice and salad. It is boring to eat rice and salad all the time [...] sometimes I skip lunch or dinner not to eat the same thing over and over again” (Medina, female, 19 years old, 6 months on the boat)

Secondly, neither COA nor the chiefs consulted asylum seekers about their food preferences, their allergies, or about their dining schedule. Some respondents do not know whether the food they eat has allergenic ingredients or not. In addition, most respondents mentioned that they were used to eating dinner after 20:00. Since the dining time ends at 18:00, they sometimes feel hungry in the evening. Even if they want to save the food for later and eat it in their room, they underlined that keeping food and eating inside their room was not allowed.

Finally, most respondents occasionally experienced problems related to overcooked or undercooked foods; and unwashed or spoiled vegetables. These factors contributed greatly to the dissatisfaction. The house rule of the boat was notable in shaping asylum seekers’ dissatisfaction

with the inaccessibility of the kitchen facility. Collectively, the lack of access to the kitchen as shaped by the house rule decreased their satisfaction.

4.2.3.3 Accessibility of public facilities

This section addressed the educational, health, transportation, and recreational facilities. To start with education facilities, most asylum seekers were attending Dutch language lessons. This lesson was first started with volunteers from the local communities. Then with the support of the municipality and NGOs, they attended a formal Dutch language school which was located five minutes walking distance away from the boat. Most of the respondents confirmed that they managed to know the language basics for greeting, shopping, asking for directions, and the pronunciation of some letters. After studying for four months, the language lesson was stopped. According to the respondents, the school was stopped by the decision COA. Consequently, asylum seekers were not satisfied with the decisions that followed up the change of facilitating organization. Nadiya cited;

“I was studying Dutch, but now the school is finished....the language is very important for me. I prefer just to continue the language. Because now is the right time. After that we start working, we may not have enough time to start learning” (Nadiya, female, 3 months on the boat)

The interview with MANO representatives was conducted two weeks after the interview with asylum seekers. *the activity organizers* pointed out that they managed to resume the language lessons by collaborating with local volunteers. and events such as Walk and Talk to exercise their language level. Overall, the asylum seekers had the opportunity to learn the language through different mechanisms. This was a sporadic case for asylum seekers who are waiting for the decision on their status in the Netherlands (see Geuijen et al., 2020).

Regarding health facilities, all interviewees also agreed that they have good access to the service. When it is needed, asylum seekers had the opportunity to visit general practitioners found nearby the boat. Rendering to the interviewees, if they had an appointment to health services that are distant from the boat, COA/Municipality always provided them with a ‘red card’. This card grants them free access to public transportation for 24 hours. Accordingly, all interviewees were satisfied with having access to health services.

All asylum seekers mentioned the advantages and challenges of the accessibility of transportation. The metro, tram, and bus stops were found within short walking distance. However, asylum seekers merely used these transportation options. They do not have any source of income or financial support from COA. They mostly use public transportation when they have the ‘Red card’ for attending appointments. This limits their ability to go to distant places from the boat and engage in different activities. Hence, asylum seekers only have physical but not financial access to public transportation. To minimize this issue, the municipality provided 10 bicycles for asylum seekers. The interviewees believed it was a good mitigation approach to solve the transportation issue. Nevertheless, the numbers of bicycles were too low compared to

the number of users. Furthermore, the sizes of most of the bicycles were too big for them and some of them were not working at all. These factors obstruct asylum seekers' determination for moving around places.

Asylum seekers were very satisfied with the accessibility of recreational facilities. There were many recreational facilities around the boat. For example, parks, playgrounds, sitting places along the river, and canals are the types of recreational facilities mentioned by the interviewees. This provides them with several options to spend their time outside of the emergency shelter.

In general, asylum seekers were satisfied with most of the accessibility of public facilities. They were satisfied with access to the dutch language lessons and recreational facilities. Despite the lack of physical accessibility to public transportation, financial constraints limit their satisfaction.

4.2.4 Social Acceptability in the Emergency Shelter

This section mainly covered asylum seekers' social life, especially the relationships they have within and outside of the boat. It also addressed their daily experiences with activities they engaged in. Asylum seekers' attachment to the place is also covered under this topic. To provide content about this section, the discussion started with the activities that most asylum seekers engaged in.

COA and the municipality of Rotterdam cooperated with an NGO called MANO; which focused on facilitating activities for asylum seekers by mobilizing volunteers and donor organizations. There was a variety of activities took place for asylum seekers. Some of the activities took place on weekly basis. For instance, meeting with the psychologist, Dutch language class, yoga, boot camping, and boxing activities occurred 1-3 days per week. There were several one-time activities as well. These were mostly event-based activities organized with the collaboration of different organizations. Activities such as Opera night, Arab film festival, boot camping, Walk and Talk, baking, and barbeque were among the activities listed by the asylum seekers and activity coordinators. Additionally, there were different types of games like board games and table tennis to increase asylum seekers' options to interact with each other and remain active on the boat.

4.2.4.1 Inter-relationship among asylum seekers

All respondents claimed to have good relationships with each other. Most were involved in different activities together that helped them to spend more time interacting, sharing their culture, and developing a friendship. Hence, all respondents agreed about the effect of social activities on strengthening their relationships with each other. *Ruba* mentioned:

“At the beginning, the biggest challenge was to bring the people together because as we know, like, there are different cultures over here. You could see them like they are grouping [...] So what we did is like we made sure we have in the activities that they need to go in groups to mix

the groups [...] now they all know each other, and they just like to live with each other.” (Ruba, activity organizer, former employee of MANO)

The study found that most asylum seekers frequently meet each other around common spaces of the boat every day. The respondent believed that compared to their previous accommodation they live with a very small number of asylum seekers. This helped them to build strong connections and trust among each other. It also minimized the formation of grouping and segregation as Ruba mentioned above. Hence, it paved a path for building social cohesion among themselves (Chiu, 2004). Hayat underlined this as;

“Since we know each other I don’t have to worry if I forget my cloth in the laundry. because someone will keep them for me.”

The respondents resembled that living only with female asylum seekers was also an influential factor in feeling safe and secure with the friendship they build. They also said that, due to the cultural, traditional, and religious values, it was easier for them to make a connection and build trust on the boat rather than in their living experience in previous reception centers (all gender live on the same compound). Hence, it makes it easier for them to socialize rather than be isolated. Finally, most respondents preferred to spend their evenings walking around the neighborhood, sitting by the river and canals, or in one of the parks around the boat. Being able to access these public facilities also channeled the strong relationship they formed.

Nonetheless, asylum seekers were frequently transferred from the boat to other reception facilities or vice versa. Due to this, the strong friendship they built can easily languish. The respondents also stated that this discouraged them from making similar stronger connections with newcomers. Thus, the way the house rule of the boat shapes their relationship was found to be dissatisfactory.

Concluding, asylum seekers were satisfied with the relationship they had among themselves. Having several activities, living in small-scaled shelters, living only with female asylum seekers, and having access to recreational facilities were factors that help asylum seekers to build strong relationships among themselves. Yet, the frequent transfer of asylum seekers from and to the boat results in the discouragement of making strong relationships.

4.2.4.2 Intra-relationship of asylum seekers

Most of the asylum seekers’ families, friends, and loved ones were not living in the Netherlands. For many of them, their relationship was limited to phone calls over the internet. Some of the asylum seekers have friends, family members, or a community network from their country of origin that lives in the Netherlands. Their relationship was found to be constrained by financial problems. Unless there was financial support from friends or family members, phone calls and the internet were the usual way of connecting with them. Though the loved ones offered to pay a visit, The respondents mentioned that they were restricted from bringing visitors inside the boat.

Therefore, the house rule of the boat has shaped the relationship between asylum seekers and loved ones to be restricted via the internet. Here, the accessibility of internet facilities was crucial for maintaining their relationship.

The respondents also expressed the relationship they had with the staff. According to respondents, their relationship always followed professionalism. But they believed they have relatively more friendly relationships with all staff workers except COA. The respondents feel free to ask for help and they were able to get support easily. “According to COA regulations, staff and refugees were not allowed friends” (Rast & Younes 2020, p.861). It also set delimited the type of conversations that should exist among them to be guiding them on the asylum procedure, gather information, and give instructions (Horst, 2004; Rast & Younes, 2020). Therefore, the existing distant relationship between asylum seekers and COA workers on the boat was likely to be the restrictions of the rules.

Asylum seekers' relationship with the local community is mostly associated with the voluntary activities that took place on the boat or outside of the boat. as The activities include Dutch language lessons, boot camping, community gathering in nearby churches, and sports activities. The local communities helped asylum seekers to introduce them to the living environment in the Netherlands, their language, and networking. The respondents were satisfied with this aspect. Nevertheless, while engaging in several activities with the local communities, all asylum seekers had to return to the boat to attend dining time. Most respondents stated that they miss some important activities, events, or meetings with the local communities for the sake of attending dining time. They believed this influenced the potential for building stronger connections. Thus, the way the house rule of the boat shapes their relationship was found to be dissatisfactory.

Generally, asylum seekers' relationship with their loved ones was restricted to phone calls and the internet. Except for COA, their relationship with staff members was satisfactory. Most importantly, they managed to form a good relationship with the local community. The activities organized by COA and access to the internet helped asylum seekers build and maintain relationships respectively. The role of the 'transfer' and 'dining time' house rules in shaping the intra-relationships of asylum seekers was unsatisfactory.

4.2.4.3 Discrimination and Nuisance

All respondents agreed that they never experienced any sort of discrimination and nuisance in their daily practices and relationship they had on the boat. They revealed that everyone was able to follow their religious practices freely. They also mentioned that no one complained about being discriminated against by their political view, gender, ethnicity, or sex. The respondents were also aware of the importance of respecting others' backgrounds as well as the seriousness of the crime. Hence, the house rules were significant in shaping their satisfaction with being protected from discrimination and nuisance on the boat.

Most asylum seekers adhered to living only with females to avoid the fear of being harassed or confronted about the way they dressed, belief, or act while they were living within the same compound with men asylum seekers. Likewise, the activities organized by MANO were designed to consider asylum seekers' gender and cultural and religious backgrounds. To avoid their exposure to discrimination and an uncomfortable environment, female professionals and volunteers were appointed for certain tasks (e.g. Yoga trainers, cycling teachers, psychologists, and translators). They also created a comfortable environment for the asylum seekers to do certain activities (e.g. closed room during Yoga exercises). As a result, it provided them the comfort to freely express themselves without being pressured by the prevalence of sexual harassment or gender-based violations (Nassim et al., 2021).

Nonetheless, some respondents had experienced a sense of coercion in their relationship with the local communities. According to Sara,

“some people ask uncomfortable and personal questions about our life that we do not want to discuss. But in our culture, it is rude not to answer people's questions. Therefore we answered them even if we don't want to” (Sara, female, 34 years old, 2 months on the boat).

They shared that such situations commonly happened during public events and social gatherings around the neighborhood. In addition, few respondents had experience discrimination based on their status. Laura shared,

“As soon as they realized you are asylum seekers, they looked at you and speak to you differently. I had to confront them many times to make them change their mind. But, they are ignorant.”

Overall, asylum seekers' experience of discrimination and nuisance was recorded only in the relationship they had with the local community. The house rules as well as living on the female asylum seekers' was important in safeguarding asylum seekers from discrimination and nuisance on the boat.

4.3 Psychological well-being of asylum seekers as Shaped by the Acceptability of Adequate Housing

The relationship between housing adequacy and asylum seekers' psychological well-being was explained in chapter two. It showed that the autonomy and competency of a person (asylum seekers in this case) are strongly affected by the adequacy of housing. Below, the effect of the acceptability of adequate housing on asylum seekers' autonomy and competency as discoursed by Martela & Sheldon (2019) and Ryff (1989) is discussed.

4.3.1 Autonomy

Most respondents believed that their autonomy was not respected all the time. They agreed that their ability to plan and commute to their daily activities by their preferences was contested in the following circumstances;

First, since asylum seekers cannot choose their food, they feel less autonomous regarding what they eat, when to eat, where to eat, and how to maintain their diet. Hence, the dissatisfaction with the inaccessibility of the kitchen as shaped by the house rules; impelled asylum seekers to feel less autonomous. Usually fixing meal times is one way of controlling asylum seekers' autonomy that halts their independence from arranging their time which authorities seem to be less aware of or ignored its impact (Kreichauf, 2018b). Secondly, because of the incapability of asylum seekers to clean their bathrooms by themselves, they feel less autonomous in terms of selecting cleaning apparatuses, procedures, and cleaning dates and times. Accordingly, the lack of satisfaction with the inaccessibility of the hygiene materials as shaped by the house rules; led to asylum seekers feeling less autonomous. Hayat quoted,

“We have to wait for the cleaning crew to clean our bathroom. If I want to clean it every day, I can only use soap and water. But, if we were provided with all the necessary equipment that I need to clean my bathroom, I prefer to clean it more often. ” (Hayat, female, 31 years old, 6 months on the boat)

Finally, since asylum seekers' movement was limited within the surrounding neighborhoods of the boat, they feel less autonomous in choosing activities that existed further from their accommodation or visiting places outside of the city. Thus, the dissatisfaction with the financial inaccessibility of public transportation affects them from being autonomous in this regard.

Despite of the above circumstances, asylum seekers' autonomy was respected on many occasions. The respondents claimed that they have the autonomy to design their daily routines. They do these activities on their initiative and desires without being influenced by any external body. Their autonomy was demonstrated in the:

First, as asylum seekers were able to do their activities without the fear of being seen, disturbed, or judged; they were more autonomous in arranging, prioritizing, and executing their daily tasks based on their choices. Thus, the emergency shelter was an important tool for exercising their autonomy because “private spaces enable the self-reflection required to create, develop and evaluate goals and plans, while being protected from public criticism” (Dawkins 2017, p.425). In this case, the satisfaction with their privacy as shaped by the house rules enhanced asylum seekers' autonomy. Secondly, due to the capability to move around the neighborhood without being afraid of any assault, asylum seekers also believed they were autonomous in choosing places and the time to go out alone or in a group. As a result, their satisfaction with the safety condition of the neighborhood was an influential factor in feeling more autonomous.

Third, asylum seekers alleged that the presence of several local shops, food and clothing stores, cafes, restaurants, and street vendors elevated their autonomy by helping them to explore more options in finding places that they can afford. Satisfaction with the location of the boat was crucial in empowering them to practice their autonomy in this aspect. Fourth, since asylum seekers were able to spend their leisure time nearby the boat doing picnics, walking, cycling, and other activities to entertain themselves, they feel autonomous in choosing where to go and what to do depending on their mood. Their satisfaction with access to recreational facilities lifted their ability to entertain their autonomy.

Finally, as a result of involving in diverse activities on and outside of the boat, asylum seekers feel autonomous in building stronger connections with other asylum seekers who have similar interests or hobbies. The satisfaction of asylum seekers with their inter-relationship was key for asylum seekers to become autonomous. Though, it is needful to acknowledge the lack of satisfaction with the inter-relationship among asylum seekers, as shaped by the transfer house rule lowered their autonomy.

In general, asylum seekers feel autonomous in most cases. They compared their experiences with their previous accommodations and they believed they have more autonomy living on the boat. Nonetheless, the lack of autonomy associated with their inability to choose their own food remained critical.

4.3.2 Competency

Most asylum seekers had various opportunities that helped their ability to learn new skills that are important for adapting to the 'Dutch lifestyle'. According to the respondents, the opportunities were; First, since asylum seekers were able to know the basics of the Dutch language, they feel competent in listening and understanding conversations, reading billboards and capturing the messages, and understanding the content of foods while buying different items from stores. Their satisfaction with access to educational facilities increased their ability to become competent. However, due to the irregularity of language lesson delivery mechanisms (volunteers and school), asylum seekers were not able to achieve the desired language proficiency level. They believed that this condition hindered their ability to be more competent than they were.

Secondly, as a result of having occasional access to the Red Card helped them to competent by understanding how the public transport system works. This includes reading maps, understanding the routes, and navigating directions. The satisfaction with the physical accessibility of transportation was essential for the advancement of their competency. Ruba's opinion towards this was;

“They learn how to use the maps on the stations, Google map and everything [...] Now everybody knows how to use the tram. Everybody knows how to fill their card in the machines in the metro. But, if you bring someone who's living in the middle of nowhere they don't know

[...] Like seeing a machine help you to know, like, what do I do? Where do I fill the card? How do I use this? Or the numbers for the trams and metros? The map? So being in the city also makes them more daring to take steps outside their comfort zone.” (Ruba, female, former activity organizer of MANO)

On the other side, since asylum seekers were not able to travel further from their accommodation, they feel less competent by not engaging in valuable activities such as voluntary activities and networking events. Some respondents share that they missed networking invitations that could potentially shape their career path. The lack of satisfaction with the financial inaccessibility of public transportation weakened the opportunity to be more competent.

Finally, given that asylum seekers were able to in different activities with the local community; it helped them to be competent by learning the values of the society and adapting to the cycling culture. The satisfaction with the intra-relationships of asylum seekers was fundamental for becoming more competent. But, the respondents also shared that they were not able to achieve the desired level of outcomes from the activities. This is due to the interruptions of activities for attending dining time. Nonetheless, since asylum seekers' connection with their loved ones living in the Netherlands was dependent on the internet, they feel less competent regarding their incapability of achieving their plan (i.e. meeting in person). Asylum seekers' dissatisfaction with both the financial inaccessibility of public transportation and with the intra-relationships as shaped by the visitor house rule decreased their competency.

Generally, the findings of this study show that asylum seekers could develop new skills and adapt to the new environment, hence increasing their competency during their stay in the emergency shelter. Different dimensions of housing acceptability were found to be related to this result. Asylum seekers were able to have access to learn the Dutch language lesson, the occasional access 'Red card', and build a strong relationship with the local community related to the positive result of their competency.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Discussion and Conclusion

Following the reception crisis, emergency shelters have been used as a mitigation approach to reduce the demand for accommodation in the Netherlands (Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). Asylum seekers have been sheltered in abandoned prisons, boats, office buildings, sports halls, COVID-19 centers, on pavilions, and others; and they were facing inadequate housing problems (Daams et al., 2019; Rast & Younes, 2020; Younes et al., 2021).

The purpose of this thesis was to address the research gaps, first, by studying the adequacy of housing using the acceptability principle by Ayala et al. (2019) in the emergency shelter; especially in the case of boats which are the least to be studied. Secondly, in recent studies, the influence of house rules on the adequacy of reception centers was briefly discussed (see Horst, 2004; Younes et al., 2021). This thesis aimed therefore to have an in-depth understanding of how house rules shape the acceptability of housing in emergency shelters. Lastly, this research aimed to fill the gap in the literature by assessing how the adequacy of housing conditions on the boat could associate with asylum seekers' ability to exercise their autonomy and become competent as discussed (Martela & Sheldon, 2019; Ryff, 1989).

5.1.1 The house rules in the Emergency Shelter

The finding of this study showed that the asylum seekers were subjected to both the COA's and the boat's house which were adapted from its previous hotel service. They shared common sets of rules in the provision of quality of life in the emergency shelter, but have major differences in the rules concerning accommodation management. Since the boat was the shelter provider, the house rules of the boat were dominantly implemented. This does not align with the national scale implementation initiative of the house rules of COA (see COA, 2017).

Most asylum seekers felt these rules prioritized assuring the physical conditions of the boat rather than their daily life on the boat. They believed that it is due to the rigidity of the house rules of the boat related to accommodation management. For instance, COA only provides food only if a kitchen facility is not installed in the accommodation (ECRE, 2019). However, the boat has a kitchen but its house rules outlaw asylum seekers from using it. These conditions justified that the asylum seekers lived in a more controlled environment than most reception centers in the Netherlands where the house rules of COA are only implemented. This means the ability of house rules to shape asylum seekers' behavior in their daily activities was more than the other lives in most reception. The implication of this situation corresponds with the study (Szczepanikova, 2013). This is due to the "internally controlled events" that direct asylum seekers' behavior with more 'I have to' and 'I should to' thoughts (Deci & Ryan 1988, p.1031; Plant et al., 1985).

5.1.2 Acceptability of adequate housing as shaped by house rules

The finding of this study indicates that asylum seekers were satisfied with several acceptabilities of housing on the boat. First, asylum seekers were satisfied with their privacy, safety, and the hygiene of the boat as a whole. These are components of the basic housing needs, as explained by Kromhout & Van Ham (2012), which most asylum reception facilities in the Netherlands lack due to overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, theft, and exposure to weather conditions (Rast & Younes, 2020; Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). Secondly, asylum seekers were satisfied with the location of the boat along with the opportunities it brought to them. This fulfills the COA's criteria for the allocation of reception facilities to be within or near to large municipality (Daams et al., 2019). This was unlikely compared to most asylum seekers living in remote places isolated from the surrounding communities (Katz, 2017; Kreichauf, 2018b).

Third, asylum seekers had sufficient access to basic facilities and public services, aligning with COA, expecting all reception facilities to provide good access to services and facilities (Daams et al., 2019). The finding of this study in this regard contrasted with studies of Wijkhuijs & Duin (2017) and Younes et al. (2021) on emergency shelters with different prior use of buildings, such as halls and prisons. Finally, asylum seekers were also satisfied with the relationship they had with other asylum seekers and local communities. It strongly resonates with the 'Co-living' concept of Geuijen et al. (2020) which aims to minimize the existing discomfort relationship with asylum seekers and the opposition of local communities against the allocation of reception facilities (Zill et al., 2021).

The role of house rules in shaping the acceptability of housing was strongly associated with asylum seekers' satisfaction with privacy, safety, and hygiene of the common spaces, and with the relationship among themselves. The house rules aimed to improve the quality of life of asylum seekers were crucial in avoiding the "vulnerable to occurrences of different forms of violence, especially instances of sexual and gender-based violence" that existed in most reception facilities (Nassim et al. 2021, p.N.A). Yet, the house rules were decisive in fulfilling the physical and social acceptability of housing on the boat as discussed by (Ayala et al., 2019).

The study also identified a lack of satisfaction with the acceptability of housing. The inaccessibility of the kitchen and cleaning supplies was found to be the most critical. Besides, the lack of natural lighting in some rooms, financial inaccessibility of transportation, and limitations with asylum seekers' relationships with loved ones contributed to the lack of acceptability. The criteria of COA for selecting shelters for reception facilities lack in considering these circumstances (see Daams et al., 2019; COA 2022). The rules related to the effective management of accommodations, specifically related to dining time, hygiene, and visitors were highly associated with the lack of satisfaction with housing. They did not consider the important values of asylum seekers. Aligning with Nassim et al., (2021), these values are prayer time for Muslim communities, cooking traditions, intercultural differences, intimacy, and others.

5.1.3 The psychological well-being of asylum seekers as shaped by the acceptability of adequate housing

The findings of this study showed that asylum seekers felt autonomous in designing and making choices in their daily routines. In addition, they were able to choose and build stronger connections with each other. The satisfaction with privacy and safety as shaped by the house rules was influential in exercising their autonomy. Moreover, their satisfaction with social activities, proximity to the city, and with inter-relationships on the boat was pivotal for enhancing their autonomy. Hence, housing was an important medium to enhance asylum seekers' autonomy agreeing with Dawkins (2017).

Even so, asylum seekers feel less autonomous in making choices and decisions in important aspects of their daily life. They did not have autonomy in personalizing their diet with respect to choosing their food, place, and time to eat. Similarly, they also lack to use their autonomy in cleaning their environment. These findings contradict the argument of autonomy as having “control over the selection and management of one’s home” (Dawkins 2017, p.424).

The competency of asylum seekers was highly established by learning the values of the society, the basics of the Dutch language, the cycling culture, and how public transport operates. The satisfaction with asylum seekers' relationships with the local communities was fundamental. It followed the principle of ‘Co-learning’ as explained by (Geuijen et al., 2020), and opposes by Anne et al. (2016) and Hauge et al. (2017), which claimed housing and developing new skills to have weak relationships. In addition to the intra-relationship, access to public facilities supports their competency. Although learning these skills helped asylum seekers to adapt to the Dutch lifestyle faster, lack of steadiness in the language program and the organized activities reduced their ability to reach their intended level of achievement.

5.1.4 Summary of the Findings

To conclude, this study found that all respondents believed they were in more acceptable housing conditions that enhanced their autonomy and level of competency in most reception centers across the Netherlands. Regarding the house rules, those that aimed to improve the quality of living were strongly associated with the satisfaction of asylum seekers with the acceptability of housing. While the house rules aimed for effective management of the accommodations shaped the lack of satisfaction with the acceptability of housing.

The study also disclosed five aspects of housing that strongly contribute to the satisfaction with the acceptability of housing in emergency shelters which also leads asylum seekers to be more autonomous and competent. With no practical order;

First, *access to private rooms and bathrooms* was related to the satisfaction with the privacy and safety on the boat. Secondly, the *total number of asylum seekers* was important for the satisfaction with the inter-relationship among asylum seekers and in avoiding exposure to

discrimination and nuisance. Third, *the location of the boat* was associated with the satisfaction of proximity to the city center, access to public facilities, an intra-relationship between asylum seekers and the local community, and the safety of the neighborhood. Fourth, *the involvement of NGO (MANO)* enhanced asylum seekers' inter and intra-relationships on the boat. Finally, *living with female asylum seekers* was also influential for the satisfaction with the inter-relationship of asylum seekers as well as their safety. These findings aligned with the 'most basic need range for shelter' as discussed by (Kromhout & Van Ham, 2012; Niezabitowski, 1987); and the five basic housing needs from the neighborhood scale discussed by Guttu et al. (2004). Nevertheless, this research also showed that asylum seekers were dissatisfied mainly with the inaccessibility of autonomy in their daily life.

Concerning asylum seekers' psychological well-being, the satisfaction with the acceptability of housing; which is influenced by the house rules and other aspects of housing (mentioned above) was associated with asylum seekers being autonomous and competent. Whereas, the lack of satisfaction with the acceptability of housing; as shaped by the house rules and other housing factors covered above was associated with a lack of autonomy and competency. This finding accord with the strong relationship between the physical and social components of housing and well-being (see Anne et al., 2016; Hauge et al., 2017).

5.2 Recommendations

The findings of the study showed that other factors influenced the outcomes, but need further study. First, the scale of the regulatory environment was limited to the house rules scale. Therefore the study suggests a further study should be done on the influence of regulations at national, continental, or global on the acceptability of housing in reception facilities. Secondly, the study treats female asylum seekers similarly to other 'asylum seekers' and lacks in-depth discussion from a gender perspective. Thus, the study suggests further study on how the acceptability of housing in emergency shelters is assessed from a gender perspective. Finally, the study found that due to the temporariness of the emergency shelter, asylum seekers responded using an expression such as 'it is ok', 'it is fine', 'tolerable', 'it is not big deal', or 'manageable' to certain conditions. Hence, the study also suggests further study on the influence of temporariness feeling on the adequacy of reception shelters as well as asylum seekers' well-being. Largely, the study could be further developed by taking more dimensions from both concepts and considering similar cases and conducting a comparison study.

The study pinned several implications that could use as input for policymakers. First, the criteria of COA for allocation of new emergency shelters should include the social aspect of housing that promotes co-living and co-learning with the local communities. In addition to the basic infrastructure, these criteria should also include the common challenges of availability and accessibility of sanitation and kitchen facilities in emergency shelters. Secondly, the study suggests for adaption of small scaled shelters and private room provision approaches to mitigate the perception of reception facilities having inhumane living conditions as explained by

(Wijkhuijs & Duin, 2017). Third, the house rules in emergency shelters should prioritize the basic needs of asylum seekers and they should promote multicultural diversity through a participatory approach. Finally, the active collaboration of NGOs and municipalities was crucial in improving the waiting period of asylum seekers to be a more productive and better living environment in reception facilities. Therefore the active involvement of stakeholders should be expanded to all types of reception facilities.

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Annex 1: Research Instruments

Interview guide and questions

My name is Yoseph Gebremeskel. I am an urban planner from Ethiopia. Currently, I am studying for my master's in Urban Management and Development program at IHS Erasmus University of Rotterdam. This interview is intended for the academic fulfillment of my thesis. It aims to assess how the acceptability of adequate housing conditions in emergency shelters affects the well-being of asylum seekers. This interview will have sets of questions that mainly focuses on your living experience in the emergency shelter from different perspectives. It will also include basic background information about yourself.

It is very important to know that the shared information in this interview will remain confidential and anonymous. All the information shared in this interview will be used only for academic purposes. This interview will take between 25-35 minutes. Before moving to the interview questions, I want your consent to make this interview and record it as well. It is to capture all the information shared for better analysis.

1. Semi-structured interviews with asylum seekers

Background of the asylum seeker

Can you introduce your:

- Age
- Education level
- Previous work
- Where you are from?
- How do you arrive in the Netherlands?
- How long have you stayed here?

Living space

- Can you describe what it feels like to live in an emergency shelter?
- What is your opinion and experience about the house rules?
- Can you tell me about your daily routines? Where did you spend most of your time? Why?
- How many people do you live in one room?
- How does this affect your daily routines? Can you explain more?
- Do you think the room is large enough for you and/or your family /roommates? Why?
- How many asylum seekers live on the boat?
- What does it feel like to live with.....people in one room? Why?
- Can you explain what it looks like to live with.....asylum seekers on the boat?
- Are you satisfied with the size of the room? What about the number of asylum seekers who live on the boat?
- Can you explain the safety of the emergency shelter from fire, weather, or natural disaster? Are you satisfied with the safety of living on the boat?

- Do you feel secure from unwelcome intruders or any kind of theft? Please explain more.
- Do you feel safe in your room? And other public spaces? Can you explain the reason?
- Are you satisfied with the safety of living on the boat? Why? Can you explain more?
- Do you think your privacy is respected all the time? Can you explain more?
- Do you have enough privacy in your room? Can you explain more?
- Can you explain the hygiene condition of the emergency shelter?
- Who cleans the rooms and common areas? Why?
- Are you satisfied with the hygiene of the boat? Can you explain more?

Location

- Can you share with me your opinion about the location of the emergency shelter?
- How does the location help (not) to access the city center, and other places you want to go? Are you satisfied with the location of the boat?
- How does this affect your daily life?
- Do you work or engage in voluntary activities outside the reception center? Why?
- If yes, what are the reasons for choosing any type of voluntary activity? Can you explain more?
- How does the location of the emergency shelter influence your ability to access job opportunities/voluntary?

Facilities

- Do you have access to facilities such as water, electricity, heating, lighting, and the internet?
- Are you satisfied with the accessibility of these basic facilities? Can you explain more, please?
- Are you satisfied with your experience regarding the sanitation facility in the shelter (shower, toilet, laundry, and basin)?
- Can you explain the level of your privacy and safety in the sanitation facility?
- Can you describe your experience with the kitchen facilities? How does it operate?
- Are you satisfied with the kitchen facilities? Can you explain more, please?
- Are there any recreational facilities nearby the emergency shelters? What type?
- Are you satisfied with the accessibility of recreational facilities around the shelter?
- Which types of recreational facilities do you prefer to go to? With who? Why?
- Do you have access to educational (e.g. classrooms for training or courses, computer lab, library) and health services in/nearby the emergency shelter?
- Are you satisfied with the accessibility of educational and health services? Can you explain more, please?
- If yes, do you think that you have sufficient educational alternatives that suit your preference? (E.g. courses, training, study materials)
- What motivates you to join or not to join educational services?
- How do you assess the accessibility of transportation? Why?
- Do you think you have enough alternatives for public transportation?

- Are you satisfied with the accessibility of transportation? Can you explain more?

Socio-cultural

- Can you tell me the types of social and cultural activities you have in the reception centers? Who organized them?
- What are the mandatory and alternative activities in the reception centers?
- Do you think these activities take into account the culture, religion, and traditions of asylum seekers?
- Which activities are you involved in?
- What makes you decide to choose them?
- What types of activities (individually and in the group) do you do to develop your skills? Where? Why?
- Can you explain your relationship with A) asylum seekers? B) Volunteers? C) Staff workers?
- What types of activities did you engage with them asylum seekers, volunteers, and staff workers?
- With whom did you spend more time? Why?
- Can you explain your relationship with the local community?
- What types of activities did you engage with them?
- Are you satisfied with your relationship with the local community?
- How does the relationship with the local community support (not) to be familiar with the lifestyle of the Dutch people?
- Do you have any family, friends, or friends who live in the Netherlands?
- If yes, how often do you meet them? Why?
- Where do you meet them? Why?
- Do you feel comfortable inviting them to your accommodation? Why?
- Do you think your privacy is always respected in your relationship with others? (e.g family friends, and loved ones) How?
- Have you ever experienced or heard about any types of discrimination in relationships with these groups in the emergency shelters?
- Do you practice any religious and cultural activities? Where? Why?

2. Semi-structured interviews with representatives from NGO (MANO)

Background

- Name:
- Your task/responsibility in the emergency shelter:
- How long have you been working:

Company profile

Can you tell me about the company profile of MANO?

- Starting year
- Missions, goals, and objectives of MANO
- What type of services does MANO provide?
- Who are the main partners of MANO? What is their role?

About emergency center

- Can you explain the role of MANO in the emergency shelter (the women's boat)?
- What do you think working with asylum seekers on the women's boat looks like?
- What are the types of activities you organize on the women's boat?
- Do you think the activities you organize are sufficient in providing diverse alternatives to asylum seekers?
- Can you explain the selection and decision process in organizing these activities?
- What do you think is the contribution of asylum seekers in this process?
- What are the main goals of these activities?
- What are the main factors you consider while organizing these activities? (age, culture, diversity, religion, privacy, choice)
- How frequently do you organize these activities?
- For how long do these activities last? (continuity)
- Where do you organize these activities and why do you prefer these places?
- At what time are most activities taking place? Why?
- What do you think about the contribution of local communities to the involvement of these activities?
- What does the motivation of asylum seekers to engage in these activities look like? Why?
- In your opinion which activities do the high number of asylum seekers participate in? Why?
- In your opinion, what are the factors that discourage asylum seekers not to involve in these activities? Why?
- What are the types of strategies you use to increase the motivation of asylum seekers to be part of the activities?

- In your opinion what are the main challenges MANO faced while organizing activities for asylum seekers who live on the boat? What types of intervention methods do you use?

Effects of Activities

- What do you think about the space on the boat and its ability to accommodate asylum seekers during activity?
- Do you think the activities consider the safety, security, and privacy of asylum seekers?
- What about the religion, culture, and traditions of asylum seekers?
- Have you ever experienced or heard about the discrimination of asylum seekers while engaging in activities?
- How do these activities affect the relationship among asylum seekers?
- How do these activities affect the relationship between MANO workers/volunteers and asylum seekers? What about the local community?
- Do you believe that asylum seekers have the freedom to choose the activities they engage in? Why?
- Do you think that asylum seekers' ability to make self-endorsed decisions to involve in activities is respected all the time? How?
- What do you think about the contribution of such activities for asylum seekers to adapt to the new environment/Dutch lifestyle? Can you explain more?
- Do you think that asylum seekers are learning new skills from these activities that are important for their future life? Why?
- Do you think that asylum seekers are using their full potential while engaging in these activities? Can you explain more?
- Do you think that asylum seekers achieve the intended goals/desired outcome? from the activities by MANO? Can you explain more?

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