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INTEGRATION - A TWO-FACED PROCESS OF FITTING IN

“A thesis on the complex journey of the integration of adult immigrants in Norway, through what is known as the Introduction programme”

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PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The basis for this research study stems from my passion in regards to the multicultural society that the world has become in general and within Norway in particular. As an immigrant myself, living in a country that was far from being heterogeneous or multicultural a little over 60 years ago, one can agree that a lot has changed and Norway has gradually become a beautiful salad bowl made up of people from different ethnicities, backgrounds, religions and cultures. Norway is increasingly receiving immigrants from all over the world, as a result of different push and pull factors. Integrating all these new country men and women in the Norwegian society is not only important, but also very crucial to the continuous development of the nation.

Five years ago, I embarked on this journey of higher education with the aim of evolving myself both intellectually and personally. The journey has been beautiful, sometimes exhausting but still very exciting. Even though I started this journey alone, I could never have amounted to what I am today without the support of people I hold very dear to me. First of all the unconditional love and support from my parents and family has been an immense psychological boost, which has armed and equipped me for setbacks and battles during this process. Secondly I want to acknowledge my sibling who have provided me with advice and mental support along the way.

A special appreciation to all my ten informants currently participating in the introduction programme. Thank you all for trusting and accepting to be part of my research and sincerely opening up to me even when you did not have to. You are highly appreciated.

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Franck Johanssen

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the two-faced process of the integration of adult immigrants through their participation in the introduction programme with the research question being; *“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”*. The theoretical approach in which this thesis is built upon revolves around a micro perspective with emphasis and focus on the individual informant participating in the introduction programme. In order to shed light on the research question through empirical findings, a qualitative method of data collection was used by conducting in-depth interviews with ten participants attending the introduction programme. The main objective of this thesis is to understand from an informant perspective how their integration in the Norwegian society through education and labour is negotiated by attending the introduction programme, and in doing so, understand the effects and impacts that this programme has on them and their integration process like for example language proficiency, socio-cultural and financial impact among other things. Moreover, other empirical findings in this thesis suggests that, during their participation in the introduction programme, many of these adult immigrants experience a number of impediments that creates barriers in their integration process, like misunderstandings with their immigration office consultants, challenges during work practices and the lack of individuality in the introduction programme etc. The core purpose of the introduction programme is to successfully arm its participants with tools that will ease their process of integration in the Norwegian society by either participating in the labour market or starting an education in order to contribute to the long-term development, not least in order to maintain a robust and economically sustainable welfare system. This in effect means that the introduction programme both directly and indirectly creates opportunities for its participants or better still prepares and educates them on how to grasp the opportunities already created.

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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a general overview of the main factors that creates room for an elaboration of the purpose and objective of this thesis will be given. In other words, I will in this chapter introduce the reader to the subject matter of this thesis while taking a quick glance at some of the historical factors that have contributed and is still contributing to a better understanding of this research area. Furthermore, I will present and elaborate on the main research question *“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”*, and thereafter discuss some central terms and finally, briefly discuss my personal motivation and drive for this particular research study.

1.0 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

“Once upon a time, a poor woodcutter, of no great skill decided to go in search of work. He left behind his family and his home in the forest, with promises that he would one day return with wealth and comfort. “Here, food is scarce and life is hard”, he told his wife, “but I have heard tell of other places where there are chances for a man like me to make my fortune” After much hardship and long days of travel, he reached the edge of the forest where he found the borders of a wealthy kingdom. There he found his way barred by guards. “Who are you and why do you seek to enter?” they asked. “Please let me in”, he replied, “I am a poor man, but work hard, I promise through my labour I will make your kingdom even greater and richer than it already is” The guards agreed to let him in saying that they would give him five years and a day to prove his worth. So the poor man entered and worked hard, digging, scrubbing and labouring for the kings’ subjects. The longer he stayed, the more his affection for the kingdom and its people grew. After five years and one day, the guards acknowledged he had proved his worth and welcomed him as a true subject of the kingdom. In return, the man asked if he could bring his wife and his children from home because they were poor and had nothing and the guards being wise and fair and also recognising his endeavours, agreed. His family, overjoyed when he sent for them, came at once, and they all lived happily ever after.

This is a migration fairy story which has important variations, where sometimes the woodcutter is escaping an evil tyrant, sometimes he is a silversmith of great skill, sometimes he is single and sometimes the woodcutter is a woman. Ideally, the story follows the trajectory of survival to civilisation with everybody befitting, but there is not always a happy

ending. The woodcutter can become lost in the forest or rejected at the border. He sometimes may be denied entry by the guards, other times he might just sneak in or simply refuse to return, and sometimes he is not even a woodcutter at all, but a thief. Moreover a single woodcutter is one matter, but hordes of them might threaten the order of nature of the kingdom. Nevertheless, the fundamentals in these stories, are that the kingdom is a far more desirable place to live in than the shack in the woods, and the immigration of these woodcutters to the kingdom, demonstrates this over and over again. (Bridget, 2013, s. 2)

Generally, arriving and settling in a new place as an immigrant or foreigner in search of greener pasture, is like passing the first step of the puzzle of transitioning to a better life, while integrating into that new environment is the second and perhaps an unending step of that puzzle which many or any immigrant of any kind anywhere in the world has to deal with in one way or the other. Most a times, when we speak of human migration, the first thing that comes to mind is the migration of people who are looking for better opportunities in the countries or places they migrate to, which is almost always the fundamental reason behind immigration, however, these better opportunities are not always necessarily economical or even social, sometimes people migrate because the continuation of their existence on earth simply depends on it. The history of the world is unavoidably a history of mobility (Bridget, 2013, s. 12). The movement of people from one place to another has always been an inherent part of our existence as humans, it is inevitable and as long as humans exist, humans will continue to migrate for different reasons.

In the words of “Sting” the famous British musician, in one of his hit songs entitled “Englishman in New York”, he describes himself as an “Alien”, or more specifically a legal alien, an Englishman in New York. The words of this song resonates in my mind every time I listen to it, because it describes the story of many aliens whether legal or illegal. Scientifically speaking, we are all aliens on this earth, and I state this because no one has ownership over the earth, we are all visitors, we live, and we die and what is most intriguing about this is that our existence before our birth and after our death remains a mystery to us. Something which is however not a mystery but rather a proven fact, is that the increased number of refugees and immigrants in general has sparked great controversy over the last years, both in Europe in general and in our case, Norway in particular . This controversy is particularly related to the question of how to integrate these newly arrived refugees and immigrants into the Norwegian society (Kobberstad, 2019). Norway is today inhabited by more foreigners than it has ever been in its entire history. There are several “push and pull” factors that have created or given

room for the current predicaments that Norway in particular and perhaps Europe in general finds itself in today. The constant turmoil and political or economic unrest in many parts of the world, have left many people fleeing in search for not only greener pastures, but for something as small and trivial as a peaceful and safe life. The idea that one can come to Norway and make a better living for themselves is almost like the idea behind which the American dream was built upon. With hard work and determination, everybody regardless of their background, values and beliefs is entitled to a better life in Norway. This rhetoric is quite true to many extents, but the reality of the matter is that a foreigner living in Norway needs to be double determined and perhaps triple motivated in order to catch up with the already well established Norwegians who have no other place but Norway to call home. In the words of H.E King Harald V of Norway, in a message about tolerance issued in September of 2016 at the garden party outside of the Royal Palace, he stated that

“Norwegians come from the north of the country, from the middle, from the south and from all the other regions. Norwegians are also immigrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Poland, Sweden, Somalia and Syria. My grandparents immigrated from Denmark and England for 110 years ago... It is not always easy to say where we are from, to know what nationality we belong to. What we call home is where the heart is, and this can not always be placed in between borders... Norwegians believe in God, Allah, everything and nothing”

The King, through this speech, made us understand that Norway today is a place for everyone regardless of where they come from, their sexual preferences or religious beliefs. These words were much needed for the thousands of foreigners who have made Norway their new home, since it served as a confirmation that Norway and its people are ready to co-exist, co-habit and to tolerate the differences between ethnic Norwegians and immigrants and to live together in harmony despite these differences.

The emphasis on the notion of being “different” immediately sends signals to indicate that the process of fitting in, into the Norwegian society eliminates the idea of “assimilation”, but rather conforms to the notion of “integration”. Assimilation as we know has to deal with the “melting pot” theory, which involves the adoption and adaptation of the ethnic majority’s values, culture and so on by the minority or in this case immigrants. While “integration” on the other hand involves the ability of the minority to be able to participate in the society in the same light with the majority, while at the same time withholding some cultural characteristics. (Eriksen, 1997). This in effect means that, even though the notion of “fitting

in” or becoming part of the society as a minority has traces in both assimilation and integration, Norway focuses more on the aspect of integration which is why the Norwegian King himself, in his 2016 speech stressed and emphasised on the differences within the Norwegian population and how it is imperative that we live together accepting these differences.

1.1 THE SUBJECT-MATTER

According to the statistic Norway(SSB), the number of immigrants as of March 2018 grew by 21 700 in 2017, which is the lowest percentage growth in the last 20 years. The number of Norwegian-born to immigrant parents grew by 11 200 in the same period. (SSB, 2018) Norway is as of 2019 home to well over 5.3 million inhabitants. Among these 5,3 million inhabitants in Norway, 944 402 of them are immigrants. 765 108 of these immigrants moved to Norway from different parts of the world, while the remaining 179 294 are immigrants born in Norway to immigrant parents. These two groups, have a background from 221 different countries and independent regions of the world. The total per cent of immigrants accounted for in the year 2019 stands at 17.7 per cent which is an increase of over 13 percent from the 1990s when immigration in Norway started seeing a significant increase throughout that decade. (SSB, 2019)

The genesis of foreign immigration to Norway as we know it today dates back to the late 1960s after the discovery of abundant natural resources such as oil and gas which meant that Norway needed more man power and thus the flow of labour immigrants from countries like Pakistan and Turkey was born. In the 1970s the second wave of immigrants to Norway was mostly as a result of the immigration of families of the labour immigrants. However, the mid 1980s started seeing an increase in the amount of refugees and asylum seekers especially from Chile, Vietnam and Sri Lanka and later on from the former Yugoslavia and hence, the immigration of family members of people who had already moved to Norway started increasing as well. (Sandnes, 2017) The fact that Norway started receiving labour immigrants in the 1960s and later asylum seekers and refugees from the 1970s and 80s (Gullestad, 2002) indicates that the coming of immigrants in general to Norway in such a scale is a relatively new phenomenon. This in effect means that both the Norwegian society at large and its local municipalities in particular have limited, and also varying experience with receiving and dealing with immigrants. (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 4)

Norway is a relatively small country in terms of its population, however, considering the fact that over 17 percent of its inhabitants are foreigners both born in and out of Norway from different countries shows the lane of multiculturalism which the country has decided to ride on. The Norwegian history of immigration is one which spans only about 60 years which on one hand a long time in quantitative terms, but on the other a very short time to enable Norway to be called an expert in the integration process of its immigrants, and by Norway I mean both its people as individuals and the society as a whole.

As a result of the continuous immigration of foreigners into Norway and the highest amount of immigrants ever registered, the term “integration” is now more evident to the Norwegian population and society as a whole than it has ever been in its entire history. Different types of immigrants face different types of challenges in Norway and sometimes even require different types of integration processes. As *Brochmann 2nd edition* points out, there is a difference in being a labour immigrant and a refugee in Norway. Statistically, refugees usually have to go over a higher threshold in order to get in the labour market (NOU 2017:2) According to this selection, Norway has not been able to better integrate refugees in the labour market, and one of the reasons accounted for this is the fact that most of these refugee`s background jobs or education are not usually adequately appreciated. (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 3). This is contrary to labour immigrants, who sometimes have an easier integration process but might chose not to fully integrate due to their constant relationship with their home countries.

For newly arrived immigrants, the introduction programme is the most extensive integration policy measure for them in their integration journey. Immigrants who have been granted residence take part in studies and training that equip them to participate in the Norwegian labour market or start an education (Sandnes, 2017, s. 5). Furthermore, when we write about immigrants, it is important to remember that there is no other group of persons who are more heterogenous than this. As earlier mentioned, in 2017 for example, there were people with immigrant background from well around 221 different countries and independent regions of the world living in Norway, and this in itself creates a variation in their lives and process of integration in the country (Sandnes, 2017, s. 10) Countries these immigrants come from and reasons behind their coming to Norway all have an effect on their “séjour” in the country and usually how old they are when they immigrate and also how long they have stayed are all factors that help determine the success rate of their integration process. Also, the lack of homogeneity in the groups of these newly immigrated immigrants is characterised by a variation in the level of education and work experience , as well as “race”/ethnicity, culture,

religion, regional affiliation, gender, age and many other markers for their differences. The fact that the Norwegian welfare state is built upon the notion of a homogenous population, can or has created some challenges in relationships and meetings between the welfare state institutions and immigrants (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 2) Some of such challenges will be explored in this thesis.

The process of integrating these newly arrived immigrants into the Norwegian society is a two-faced process. This means that the immigrants have a huge responsibility to work towards the acclimatisation of their new environment and also be willing to be part of the Norwegian society and conform to its values and norms. On the other hand, the ethnic majority also has a huge role to play in this process of integration, by being open minded and easing the integration process of these immigrants. The introduction programme is therefore one of measures created by the Norwegian government to enable its newly arrived immigrants to better fit in, and meet them half way through their process of integration into the Norwegian society.

1.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The central and core purpose for this Master thesis is to research and study the complex journey of integration of adult immigrants in Norway through the Introduction programme which is today the biggest and largest integration policy measure in Norway. There is more foreigners living and working in Norway today than there has ever been, and even though many of these foreigners come from EU or EØS countries, a very significant majority of immigrants in Norway come as refugees and asylum seekers who either run from war stricken zones or simply run to Norway in search for greener pastures

Even though Norway does not exactly have what is known as the assimilation policy as compared to their French counterparts for example, it is still imperative for Norway and its government that every foreigner be fully integrated in the Norwegian society. Integration in its most purest connotation, simply means bringing two different things together in one accord and in our case, bringing immigrants and ethnic Norwegians together by finding a common ground for cohabitation, but mostly by ensuring that immigrants follow and live according the laws that governs Norway while contributing to the growth of the Norwegian society and nevertheless feeling included and feeling at home.

The informants in this research study are adult immigrants and the reason for this is because they face the most difficulties when it comes to integrating themselves in the society. There are several reasons as to why this category of immigrants might be less integrated than children for example, some of which might be as a result of difficulties in language, little or no motivation for education and so forth. Is the introduction programme as good in reality as it seems on paper? and what are some of the reasons for either the success or failure of this programme towards some participants and how are these adult immigrants generally affected by this programme before, during and after its completion when it comes to being better integrated in the Norwegian society? These are some of the questions that resonate in my mind as I proceed forwards in an attempt to answer my research question.

1.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Qualitative research is out to explore human processes in a real situation or setting (Nilssen, 2012, s. 13). This type of research focuses in understanding a research query as a humanistic or idealistic approach. Though quantitative approach is a more reliable method as it is based upon numeric and methods that can be made objectively and propagated by other researchers, qualitative method is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviours and interaction (Pathak, 2013). We are often close to the people we "study" or "research about" and this closeness makes qualitative research exciting and intense, but it also comes with quite a handful of challenges (Tjora, 2017, s. 15) Looking at the manner in which my research question for this thesis is formulated, we can immediately see that the question is one which creates room for an in depth discussion between me and my informants around the topic at hand which in this case is "Integration". For example, the "How" in the question opens up doors for different perspectives and hence creating an atmosphere full of insightful thinking which is exactly what a qualitative research is built upon (Nilssen, 2012, s. 14).

Again, qualitative research is built upon some fundamental philosophical assumptions or presumptions. The ontological assumption is that there exist many realities. As a result of these different realities, we should be aware of the fact that our research can give us some answers, but not the ultimate answer. On the other hand, the epistemological assumption is based on the fact that knowledge is constructed in the meeting between the researcher and the participants of the research (Nilssen, 2012, s. 25). This simply means that the relationship between the researcher and the informant has a vital importance to the outcome of the

research. This is why formulating a research question in a manner that opens doors for in-depth reflections is vital in strengthening this relationship between the researcher and the informant and thus positively influencing the research outcome.

In order to achieve the main research objective that is presented in the previous section above, the following central research question will be dealt with.

“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”

To answer the central question above, a decomposition of the of the main problem is applied. This decomposition identifies the components of sub questions that assist towards answering the central research question. These sub questions are as follows;

- a. What impact does the introduction programme have on its participants?
- b. What are some of the challenges encountered by the participants of this programme?
- c. How does the introduction programme create opportunities for a successful journey to integration in the Norwegian society?

1.4 CENTRAL TERMS

For the purpose of avoiding misunderstanding in the meanings of the different key terms used in the process of the study, I will in this sub chapter give an elaborate definition of some of these key terms. The terms used in this thesis can often have different meanings to different people at different times, in different contexts, which is why setting a ground definition for better understanding in the context of this thesis is imperative to avoid misunderstandings along the way. The two important terms that will be defined in this section are; “immigrant” and “integration”

Firstly, an *immigrant* is defined as a person who has immigrated to Norway and who is born outside of Norway from foreign parents and four foreign grandparents, known as first generation immigrants. Norwegian-born with foreign parents are people who are born in Norway from two foreign parents and who have four foreign grandparents (SSB, 2019). The term immigrant is a descriptive one, rather than a normative term. It is also unique. These are people who have “migrated” to Norway and who do not have parents or grandparents born in the country. The immigrants that live in Norway, have come here for different reasons. Based on registration of the basis for stay, one can differentiate between fleeing, work, education

and family reunion/establishment as some of the push and pull factors for immigration. As of January 2018, the most common reasons for immigrating into Norway were people fleeing from their countries and family reunion (IMDI, 2019)

The context in which the term “immigrant” is used in this thesis, is to portray adult immigrants who have been granted residence permit in Norway as refugees. According to the UN, a refugee is defined as a person who flees from persecution either because of their race, religion, nationality, political allegiance or affiliation to a particular social group, has escaped from their home country and crossed one or more international borders (FN-sambandet, 2019). In cases where the term “immigrant” is used in a different context, a brief elaboration of the meaning will be made in such instances.

Secondly, another term which is recurrent in this research and at the same time the focal point of this study is “integration”. Integration might be the most basic concept in this thesis, but it is also the most complex due to its lack of boundaries which makes it difficult to set frames around, especially because there are no ground rules to what good or bad integration actually is. The main task for good integration is to reduce the boundaries, differences or gap between the minority and the majority within important areas that are central in the Norwegian culture like equality, secularism, education and so on and so forth. There is an emphasis on inequality in results, more than inequality in opportunities. On the other hand, integration is considered failed, if the differences in important areas as earlier mentioned increases (SSB, 2016).

In the words of Dietmar Loch (2014), *integration* has a double meaning. First, it is a fundamental topic in classical sociology. In the tradition of Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, it is important to know how a group or a society, based on an equilibrium between its collectising and differentiating forces, constructs its solidarity and guarantees its social cohesion. On the other hand, the term *integration* also refers to the integration of individuals or groups into the society. Minority group, such as workers or women, have been concerned with this process and immigrants have been one of the last groups considered (Schnapper, 2007, ss. 71-129) A long standing area of debate in Western countries is that of the appropriate philosophy for facilitating large scale immigration; should immigrants preserve their traditions and culture while living in the host country through integration or multiculturalism or should they assimilate themselves into the ways and manners of their hosts? The ways that nations go about resolving this issues goes to the heart of internal policy formulation on immigration but it is also influential to the image that the country

projects overseas. Usually, countries are often labeled according to the official views of their governments. A good example could be France, which is classed as essentially assimilationist and Britain classed as multi-cultural. However, one could ask how these policies come about, and if they accurately reflect the views of the majority of residents of the various countries (Borooah & Mangan, 2009).

1.5 PERSONAL MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

It is clearly apparent and without any ounce of doubt that a lot of studies and research have been carried out around the topic regarding integration from different perspectives with different aims and objectives. However, the numerous amount of research carried out in this particular field, has yet to quench my thirst for more knowledge on the issues of immigration and integration of immigrants generally and of course in the particular case of Norway. Being an immigrant myself, and haven experienced the complexities in the process of integration, I personally feel that it is not only my duty and responsibility to research on this topic area, but it is also a way for me to understand the notion of integration from a different lens to that which I have experienced.

During my stay in Norway, I have gone from being an immigrant who dreamt of being able to speak and converse in the Norwegian language fluently in order to feel accepted and included, to being an immigrant who feels comfortable in his abilities to excel beyond the barriers of being a foreigner, an alien, a minority, an underdog and above all a simple immigrant. I do fully grasp or understand the setbacks that one can face as a result of being an immigrant in a country, not only because I have experienced and personally lived through the process but also because I have been very much aware of my surroundings by paying attention to details and trying to understand why things are the way they are. My quest for more knowledge around this subject matter, has therefore been the foundation, motivation and driving force behind this research study.

1.6 RESEARCH STRUCTURE

This thesis is structured to have five chapters. In the first chapter, the research is introduced, which includes key sections like the subject-matter, motivation of study, purpose and objective of study etc.

The second chapter introduces the reader into the theoretical background of the study, which includes theories and framework. In this chapter, the most relevant and significant research related to the topic at hand will be identified, which will provide the reader with all the necessary theoretical information needed to understand the problem related to this particular study. The theoretical perspective in which this thesis is built upon is that of the participant's point of view. This in effect means that this research focuses on the micro perspective approach by seeking to understand how integration through education and labour is made negotiated for adult immigrants who participate in the introduction programme

Furthermore, chapter three will deal with the methodology, that is, explain the research methods and design that have been used to conduct the research. In this chapter, the reader will be introduced to the whole process and the actual steps used to carry out the research like for example, sample selection, data collection and description, coding procedure and data analysis and so on. Just like every new house being built, starts with a foundation, the foundation of this thesis is the famous qualitative method of data collection which deals with interviewing participants in-depthly and getting first hand information from them for the purpose of analysing the findings. I will in this chapter also present a portrait of some of my key informants and a complete overview of the practicalities before, during and after the interviews.

Chapter four will deal with presenting the results of the study. Taking into consideration the size of the data collected from the ten informants that I interviewed, there should at this point already be a preconceived expectation at the back of mind which further guides me in the interpretation of my findings. In a qualitative research analysis, the researcher is not occupied with the quantity of the data, but rather the quality, which is why one should first and foremostly gather the informant's thoughts, behaviours, ideas and feelings in order to get an essence of what one is out to find out. This chapter will therefore give essence to the findings from the data collected during the interviews in attempt to answer or shed light on my research question.

Finally, chapter five will entail a brief discussion and draw central conclusions about the study findings. In this chapter, I will also discuss the limitations and suggestions or recommendations for further research and finally a summary and conclusion will be made evident at the very end of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will present different theoretical approaches and analytic concepts that will help shed light on my research question; “*How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?*”. By doing so, I will in the process of this chapter look into the Norwegian welfare state and its relationship with immigration and how it creates or strengthens integration policies and measures for enabling adult immigrants to not only fit into the society, but be economically, socially and even psychologically equal to the ethnic majority. One cannot talk about integration, without looking at it from a theoretical perspective of social phenomena such as inclusion and exclusion, which is why an elaboration of such theories will also be discussed in this segment. Finally, in this chapter I will also draw in key discussions on the theoretical structure and agent perspective which is not only relevant to the subject matter of this thesis, but also very relevant to the study of social science in general and my specialisation in public administration in particular.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The questions we ask and the type of answers we arrive at as a result is usually determined by a set of assumptions about reality known as a theoretical perspective, which is also understood as a lens through which we look, serving to focus or distort what we see (Crossman, 2019). The focus on the conditions to fit in or integrate in the Norwegian society, requires the use of theories that can illuminate or shed light on both the micro and macro levels. The welfare state and its institutions in general and the introduction programme in particular sets a number of premises for participant`s opportunity to integrate. This happens by for example allowing the introduction programme to regulate and chose the target group for the programme and how the qualifications for it happens. At the same time, the introduction programme participants and their advisors or contact persons act as actors who manoeuvre and deal within the structural framework conditions (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 29).

I set to find out how the integration of adult immigrants in Norway is negotiated by attending the introduction programme within the frameworks of education and the labour market and through this, my primary focus is to understand the process of such an integration from a

micro perspective, that is, understanding the introduction programme and its impacts on these immigrants whether positive or negative, its challenges and the opportunities it is said to create, from the point of view of the individual participants who are actively involved in the programme. Also looking at things from a macro perspective, the introduction programme is initiated by the Norwegian government with its basis in the context of the welfare state which is generally agreed to be one of the most, if not the biggest and best measure for integration in Norway today according to the government. This is because the programme helps include the minority population in the mainstream ideology of the Norwegian welfare state whereby everybody has to fit in both economically and socially.

To fit in is a relational social process. This means that one cannot only focus on the minority, but one must also shed light on the role of the majority in the process. Again explaining the two-faced notion of integration. According to Kobberstad (2019), the majority's categorisation of the minority is central for the participants opportunity to fit in. Usually, theories that focus on economics have the tendency to overlook cultural aspects, while theoretical perspectives that focus on culture, also risk to oversee the material perspective. Integration in the Norwegian society and labour market has both the cultural and material aspects; The introduction programme participants who are to be integrated in the society, have a different ethnic and cultural background and competence to that of the ethnic majority, while the introduction programme is also meant to enable these participants to enjoy economic equality through their participation in the labour market. Cultural categorisation can both be stigmatising and at the same time create economic consequences in the form of inclusion and exclusion. (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 32). Despite a number of competing and complex perspectives on integration, and the substantial "gap" in employment between natives and immigrants, labour market access is increasingly seen as the most crucial element in the successful integration of immigrants (Poptcheva & Stuchlik, 2015). Research has shown that the labour market access is the most effective means of integrating persons in any society (Levitas, 2006), however, Integrating non-western refugees into the highly specialised Scandinavian labour markets have proven difficult (Djuve & Kavli, 2018). There are namely two reasons why the labour market is considered as one of the most important integration arenas for immigrants; Firstly, taking into consideration democracy and secondly taking in to consideration the welfare state. The former implies that Norway, as a democratic state, wants to give all its citizens the same opportunities to participate in the society. In democratic countries, the term "citizen" is related to social rights, obligations, participation in all arenas

and living conditions (Andersen, 2005, s. 77) In order for this to have meaning, these rights must be more than simply formal, they must also be put into practise. This is because, the labour market and work in general is fundamental to strengthening the concept of “citizenship” and to creating social equality among citizens and also because it is a source of social inclusion, improvement of living condition, commitment of citizens, responsibility and autonomy. Unemployment only leads to social inequality and poverty which is not desirable in a democratic society, and thus the labour market being a key arena for integrating immigrants (Andersen, 2005, s. 78)

The second reason why the labour market is an important arena for integration by taking into consideration the welfare state is to integrate immigrants so that they do not become a burden to the Norwegian welfare system, but be active funding members of the welfare system as the majority population. The Norwegian welfare scheme is universal and based on principles of equal treatment and equal rights, which means that everybody regardless of their status and background is eligible to benefit from welfare support as long as they have a resident permit and because of this universality, the generous Norwegian welfare model relies on high labour participation to not only maintain itself but simply survive. This in effect means that the welfare state does not appreciate or withstand groups of people who become a burden to the social budget, which is why integrating immigrants into the labour market is imperative for the society`s progress (Brochmann, 2002).

While labour immigrants (non refugees, EU immigrants) in general tend to succeed in finding highly skilled employment, this is not the case with the majority of asylum seekers or refugees in particular, who tend to find employment in what is considered the secondary labour market. Employment in the secondary labour market is usually characterised by low wages, long working hours and little to no job security and protection (Schenker & Neergaard, 2019). The disparity in the labour market between the minority and the majority, only goes to further confirm the effects of categorisation of the majority as elaborated by Kobberstad (2019). Categorisation, leads to stigmatisation, which eventually creates these economic disparities, since people of the minority feel that they are only good enough for the secondary labour market.

One could further explain this concept of categorisation through “equality/similarities and differences”. It is without doubts that the integration policy in Norway does not in any way advocate the assimilation of immigrants into the society, but rather their integration while

enabling them to withhold their own values and culture. This assumption might be differently interpreted from what we sometimes see portrayed in the society in general and even in political agendas. The Norwegian immigration policy clearly states that ethnic minorities shall integrate in the society at large by learning the Norwegian language, get a job and also take an education if they wish. Not all countries have such an immigration political agenda. This can therefore be interpreted as a subtle negative attitude of the majority towards the minority if they do not follow these immigration agendas and perhaps try to differentiate themselves (Fangen, 2010, s. 38). Fangen is trying to put words on how central notions on equality/similarities is in the Norwegian society and that differences can be perceived as something negative (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 37). The Norwegian equality mindset helps to hide the power difference between the majority and the minority, which is also quite paradoxical: “immigrants are being demanded to be Norwegians” while at the same time implying that they can actually never be Norwegians (Gullestad, 2001). While similarity is perceived as positive, the absence of such similarities and equality, is however perceived as problematic. Furthermore, connotations connected to the word “immigrant” is very stereotypical, even though the term includes a wide variety of different groups of people. The same applies for the term “refugee” which is the main audience group of the introduction programme. Research also show that people have the tendency to think of “immigrants” as educated, (Weiss, 2006), while the term “refugee” usually carries a more negative connotation to it and this is made apparent even in media outlets (Sollund, 2004).

Generally, foreigners who come to Norway as labour immigrants, come from other European countries, and most a times, their main objective is to work, earn money and travel back to their home countries. Most labour immigrants are not interested in integrating themselves culturally, and even when they learn the language, it is usually for the simple purpose of communication rather than long term integration. A labour immigrants from Poland for example is not quite as affected by categorisation as compared to a refugee from Somalia. The ethnic majority usually has a different attitude towards these labour immigrants, which stems from the idea that, these immigrants are here to work and get paid for their labour, which is not the case for refugees who are here to stay and sometimes feed on the overly generous Norwegian welfare state as a result. The key word here is “difference”. The difference in race and ethnicity, the difference in culture and the difference in the mindset towards the different types of immigrants who come to the country. Tolerance of inter-personal behavioural differences is the *leitmotif* of Western society: western countries are major donors, most high

net recipients of immigrants, and all are signatories to a number of United Nations charters which repudiate discrimination and persecution and guarantee human rights. Yet, despite this reputation for liberalism, there can be little doubt that, in the past decade or so within western countries, there is an increasing awareness of, and a hardening of attitude towards people who are “different” and in particular towards refugees (Borooah & Mangan, 2009).

Researchers often divide integration into cultural integration, residential integration, economic integration and social integration of immigrants (Valenta & Bunad, 2010). According to Portes and Zhou (1993), these sub process of immigrant integration rest upon the context of reception which includes three elements: the host government`s policies toward immigrants (which range form hostile and indifferent to generous and highly supportive policies); society`s attitudes and prejudices about immigrants; and the quality inherent in the immigrant community itself. The fact the integration is divided into these sub-processes, only further explains the subjectivity towards the concept of integration. This means that an immigrant could consider themselves economically integrated, without wanting to have any part in social integration and so forth. One can participate in a structural sense without altering their core values and orientations (Borooah & Mangan, 2009) The Polish labour immigrants which I earlier used as an example, mostly fall under the canopy of structural integration, and hence only wish to be integrated structurally for example. Are these expectations however the same for refugees? or are they excepted to be integrated both structurally and culturally since Norway is incidentally their new homes. Again, this all comes down to policies, and Norway is well renowned for their integration policies rather than assimilation policies, which indicates that immigrants, are free to chose what kind of integration they desire for themselves, as long as they do not become a burden to the welfare state, which also means that economic integration is more of a necessity and an obligation than a choice. This goes to show us why the pillars of integration through the introduction programme are education and labour or maybe just labour since the goal of education is to later on be integrated into the labour market. As Kobberstad (2019) illustrates on the idea of looking at integration from both an economic and cultural perspective, since they both have an effect on each other, it is only right that immigrants integrate themselves not only economically but also cultural, which creates a sense of inclusion and fitting in, which is also what the essence of integration is, regardless of its different nuances or sub-processes.

2.2.1. The Welfare State Perspective

Debates about immigration in Europe in general have become intensely focused on welfare and social rights. They relate both to migration defined by European states as “wanted” (such as highly-skilled labour migration) and that defined as “unwanted” (such as asylum seekers). Arguments for openness or closure of borders, is centred on the implications of migration for “natural resources” for it is important to note that even in this era of European economic and political integration, these welfare states remain decidedly national (Geddes, 2003) One could therefore sometimes wonder if one of the pull factors for immigration to a country like Norway is due to its highly generous welfare advantages both in cases of wanted and unwanted immigration and in the same light of thinking, understand how the Welfare state is directly or indirectly consolidating integration measures.

One of the most elaborated definitions of a welfare state is that of Asa Briggs which states that “A welfare state is a state in which organised power is deliberately used in an effort to modify the play of market forces in three directions: first by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income, irrespective of the marked value of their work or their property; second by narrowing insecurity to enable individuals and families to meet certain social contingencies which lead otherwise to crises, and third, by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best standard available in relation to certain agreed range of social services (Briggs, 1961, s. 228). When we take a look at the case of Norway for example, we could immediately see the characteristics of Briggs` definition in the Norwegian welfare state model which is considered universal. The universality in this model ensures that each and every citizen without distinction of status or class enjoys the best standard available in relation to certain agreed range of social services. Also, it should be noted that this universality does not in anyway discriminate on registered immigrants in Norway, which has for many years caused some sort of debates in the country on whether immigration is a drain on national welfare state resources such that it poses a “threat” or can immigration actually help “rescue” the welfare state because demographic and labour market changes require new immigrants to close the gaps in the labour market. (Geddes, 2003)

More than three decades after European host societies ended their mass recruitment of immigrant labour and a decade after they sharpened their asylum laws, the presence of large, diverse immigrant-origin communities has moved to the heart of fierce debates over identity, social order, crime and the use of public resources. Incorporating the millions of immigrants

who come to Europe and the refugees who have already made it to Europe has generated a fair share of challenges (Ireland, 2004). In international debates on whether welfare societies have sufficient capacity to juggle the effects of ambitious refugee policies alongside a public outcry for a fairer “burden sharing” approach amongst the wealthiest nations, the Scandinavian countries are usually referred to as an example of generous refugee immigration and integration policies. In the 1990s for example, it was the Scandinavian countries that awarded permanent protection and settlement rights to ninety thousand refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, with two-third of these refugees settling in Sweden (Valenta & Bunad, 2010) Today, while some Europeans are against open borders for nationalistic reasons, others simply do not see the possibilities of integrating and incorporating these immigrants in their societies. This is why the very first step to integration is acceptance, that is, acceptance of the minority by the majority, also by having an open mind towards immigration, understanding both its advantages and disadvantages. One has to be accepted and feel welcomed as a prerequisite in order to embark on the journey of integration with mental and psychological peace of mind. This is where the correlation between the Welfare State and integration comes in play. It is often assumed that the Scandinavian approach to refugee integration is partly a product of the welfare regime or welfare tradition to which Sweden and Norway belong (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

When immigrants who come to Norway for different reasons have to deal with the burden of stigmatisation which originates from the idea that many people come to Norway in search for greener pastures and pure economic reasons, integration cannot easily be negotiated in such scenarios. There are constant misconceptions portrayed by the media or right wing politicians who are against the constant influx of refugees like for example asserting that most asylum seekers who come to Norway are simply treasure hunters, who are really not fleeing from any sort of danger. However, when looking at the factual data, more than fifty percent of the 3.546 people who sought asylum in Norway in 2017 came from war ridden countries like Syria and Iraq not to mention the huge number of asylum seekers who come from unstable countries like Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran and so on. A total of 67 percent of the 6.561 who got their asylum request case treated, got their asylum granted which simply makes it a fallacy to assert that most asylum seekers who come to Norway do not do it for reasons of protection but rather treasure hunting (Høvdning, 2018).

The welfare state pressures experienced by Scandinavian countries in general and Norway in particular these last couple of years have not induced a wholesale abandonment of core

welfare state principles, not least because these remain dear to a sizable number of voters in the country (Geddes, 2003). In the same light, these pressures have not stopped the Norwegian government from continuously seeking new ways to incorporate these immigrants in the society and also ameliorate already existing integration measures which are all being fuelled by the generous welfare state system channelled through its integration policies. This in effect helps to ease the negotiation process of integration for these immigrants, hence conforming to the two-faced process of integration where both the immigrants and government/society have equal responsibilities.

2.2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion

Inclusion and exclusion are social processes that make up extremes in a continuum. In reality, it is not always the case that one is either included or excluded; this is because it is possible to be excluded from something and included in something else, like for example different sectors of the labour market (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 43). One of the most pressing discourses through out the history of mankind has been the issue of social inclusion or exclusion in different contexts and this is due to the differences between people from a racial, ethnic, religious and even ideological perspective. Perhaps if the world was literally one small village with no indifference in race, ethnicity, religion, and ideologies, the phenomenon of inclusion and exclusion will not be as apparent as it is today. However, history has shown us that even the smallest villages with no indifferences are still plagued by idea of “us vs them”, “me vs you” which only means that inclusion and exclusion are two social phenomena which are inherent to our existence as humans and individuals.

Philomena Essed (1991) has captured many aspects of contemporary discrimination in the quotation: discrimination acts may manifest themselves on levels of language; exclusion is linked to power; marginalised groups tend to be discriminated against; and discriminatory acts may be intended or non intended. Discrimination may be legally legitimized, it may be structural or it may occur in passing. The understanding of *difference* is related to different perspective on the majority society and the welfare state's acceptance of immigrants and refugees, respectively through inclusion and exclusion. Inclusion gives ethnical minorities the opportunity to be part of the society at large, like for example through work. While exclusion on the other hand entails a rejection of the ethnical minority through discriminatory processes

(Said, 2001) which can lead to lack of participation in the labour market, and the society as a whole.

One way of looking at discourses of difference/discrimination is to examine the ways in which minorities or immigrants in general actually experience racial discrimination in European societies today. However, such analysis cannot lead us to a casual explanation of racial inequality, although it will provide relevant knowledge about the many facets of racial discrimination from the perspective of the marginalised and vulnerable – that is to say, an “insider” perspective (Kryzanowski & Wodak, 2007) The other way to proceed is from the “outside” perspective, by investigating public arenas where politics are performed, such as in parliamentary discourses, election campaigns, public speeches, media reporting and so forth (Wodak, 2008). These two ways of looking at the inclusion and exclusion discourse conforms to the micro theoretical perspectives on which this study is built upon, and clearly the macro perspective also.

One of the two objectives for the introduction program in Norway is the inclusion of immigrants in education, which is believed to be one of the core pillars of a better integration into the society. Inclusion of immigrant students has become a global policy priority during the recent decade. According to the OECD (2010), immigrant students have generally more restricted access to quality education, leave school earlier and have lower academic achievements. In Norway for example, immigrant students are often categorised as “minority language students”. In educational policy, defined as having a mother tongue other than Norwegian or Sami. This group has become a frequent address for inclusive policy measures (Hilt, 2017). If we understand inclusive education as the vision that all students should be learning together as a community in regular classrooms of their neighbourhood schools (Loreman, 2007), then the introductory classes are obviously not in agreement with the ideal of inclusive education- However, as Erten and Savage (2012) points out, research has to look beyond the physical definition of inclusion.

Norway is perhaps one of the countries with the most subtle forms of discrimination whether ethnic, racial or ideological. However, there has been proven cases of open discrimination towards foreigners in general in the labour market for example, where many people with foreign names claim to have been discriminated in a job seeking processes from their applications because of their foreign names and not even given the opportunity to prove themselves in an interview. Many of these cases have been documented on many social media

platforms. The emergence of new kinds of racism in European societies, referred to variously as “Euro-racism” “symbolic racism”, “cultural racism” has been widely discussed and while these accounts differ, there is widespread agreement that racism in Europe in general is on the increase and that one of its characteristic features is hostility to immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers who are positioned in exclusionary discourse as the new “others”. In this respect, European racism is characterised by a hostility that is not exclusively defined by the traditional term of “colour” and “race”, as was typical of “biological” racism in the industrial and colonial period (Fekete, 2001) The “new” racism differs from the older kind in that it is not expressed in overtly racist terms or in the terms of neo-fascist discourse, for instance by some notion of biological or racial superiority, white supremacism or skin colour. Instead, the repertoires of justification that are typically employed use social characteristics like for example “protecting jobs, concern about welfare benefits or cultural incompatibilities or differences (migrants lack “cultural competences”, “they do not want to integrate”, “they are not “tolerant”) and so on. This new racism exploits established xenophobic frames (fear of the other), ethnocentrism, masculinities and ordinary prejudices in very subtle ways and often too, in ways that are unconscious or routinised (Delanty, Jones, & Wodak, 2008).

Many a times, people of the ethnic majority do not feel the need to rebel or be xenophobic in its different aspects against people of the minority when they do not in any way feel threatened. This in other words as I earlier mentioned means that it is possible to include the minority in something while excluding them in other things. A good example, is being at peace with the fact that the integration of minority groups does not in any way threaten the wellbeing of the majority. In order words, it is alright for foreigners to have jobs as long as the jobs that they have, are jobs not wanted by the majority. In order to conceptualise this better, one can make use of the term “subordinate inclusion” , which simply means that the minority is being included, but not in the same manner or premises as the ethnic majority population. Subordinate inclusion shows more specifically to processes where formal citizenship rights and ethnic discrimination exist side by side in the Northern welfare system (Neergaard & Mulinari, 2004). To further explain the concept of subordinate inclusion, Carter (2003:20) points at what he calls “colonisation of space” of for example workers with ethnic minority background. This has to deal with the ability for dominant groups to limit the access to higher and more sort after professions, while minorities apply where there is a very low chance for them to not get the job and where there are free vacancies and also where people of minority background already work. He also implies that, this explains why some sectors of

the labour market, especially vacancies and sectors where “white people” don’t want to work because of low income or bad working conditions, is usually connected to ethnic minorities (Kobberstad, 2019, ss. 45-46).

These concepts of inclusion and exclusion, could be applied in many different aspects, however the focus of this research study is integration via education and labour through the introduction programme, which is why I chose to focus on inclusion and exclusion from the perspectives mentioned above.

2.2.3 Structure and Agent Perspective

Were we humans not reflexive beings, there could be no such thing as a society. This is because any form of social interaction, from the dyad of the global system, requires that subjects know themselves to be themselves. Otherwise they could not acknowledge that their words were their own or that their intentions, undertakings and reactions belonged to them. Without this, no two-person interaction could begin, let alone become a stable relationship. Similarly, not one social obligation, expectation or norm could be owned by a single “member” of society. This will then make the term “social agent” meaningless (Archer, 2003). One of the most important questions in the study of social sciences has been the question on whether humans are free and independent, are we influenced by internal factors (biological, psychological, functional) and or external factors like (structure and cause)? Is a human a subject or an object? (Haug, 2007). Also, there is a standing debate over the primacy of structure or agency in shaping human behaviour. Structure is the recurrent patterned arrangements which influences or limits the choices and opportunities available, while agency is the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices (Baker, 2005). Understanding the relationship between structure and agency remains one of the most deep-seated problems in social science, which has persisted over decades, while some might argue that the debate is stale and increasingly irrelevant in the post modern world, it keeps recurring in various guises whether it is a concern about the relationship between micro and macro levels of analysis, voluntarism and the determinism or individuals in the society (Archer 1995).

The theories of structure and agent can be made apparent in this study in regards to the micro and macro perspective from which the two-faced processes of integration happens. One of the many questions asked around the topic of integration is about who has the most responsibility

in the integration process between the minority and the majority, the immigrants and the governments, the micro and the macro, the agent and the structure. Looking at integration from a macro perspective, the Norwegian government for example creates opportunities for immigrants to integrate into the society and from a structural point of view, these immigrants have limited choices or opportunities than what is been created for them. One could use the introduction programme as a direct example for this. This integration measure is a mandatory measure for adult immigrants, who have no other options but to attend the programme, if they wish to get the necessary help needed for them to ease their process of integration in the country. On the other hand, looking at integration from a micro perspective, one could place the immigrant at the centre of this process from an agent point of view, meaning the immigrant creates not only their own opportunities, but also has the power to grasp the opportunities already created for them to the best of their abilities. On one hand, people who look at the society from the perspective of methodological individualism believe that everything that happens in the society and all actions, can be traced back to single individuals, meaning a society does not have a collective capacity to act on its on, but it consist of individuals who act. While on the other hand, people with a methodological collectivism perspective believe that the structures in the society have a lot of importance for the individual`s opportunity to the extend that one cannot in reality make free choices. The choices and behaviours are usually decided or determined within the frameworks in which the individual is found in, for example, culture, politics, history, norms, religion, geography, ethnicity and so on (Østerberg, 2003).

British sociologist Anthony Giddens is also preoccupied with the relationship between structure and agent and through this, he developed an action theory that attempts to unite phenomenology and system theory. Gidden states that agents are active and use the social structures available to them. Structures on the other side give individuals opportunities and limitations. The actions of the individual influences and makes up the structure, something which in turn influence their opportunities (Garsjø, 2001). This in effect means that in the study of integration, there can not be a macro without a micro and at the same time, the agent cannot take or grasp opportunities without the structure creating these opportunities and vice versa which is why there needs to be a relationship or correlation between both. Most a times, when we study the whole phenomenon of integration and its processes, we tend to focus mainly on the relationship between the government and the immigrants from a macro and micro level , however, we tend to forget that some of the challenges that may arise during

these integration processes come from internal loopholes on macro levels before even being an issue or a setback on a micro level. A good example is that many studies have shown that municipalities, regional and national actors must cooperate better in order to create a better integration process for immigrants in the labour market and other institutions in general (Søholt et. al 2015:20). This means that without such ideal cooperation on a macro level, integration is bound to face challenges on a micro level.

It is often very easy to blame the setbacks which immigrants face in their integration process on either the immigrants not doing enough to grasp opportunities or on the governments not creating enough opportunities for these immigrants to grasp. What we fail to see or understand sometimes, are the complexities behind the process which have to be put in place in order to create these opportunities. For example, there is a huge variation between municipalities in both the content of the introduction programme and the way in which it is organised, which also means that some challenges are not universal and neither are the success stories, due to the differences in organisation and implementation of the programme in these different municipalities. Most research have concluded that in order to strengthen or ameliorate the content and execution of the introduction programme, there should be a better collaboration between the different actors who are involved and most especially between the immigration office and the Norwegian language schools (Bjerck & Eide, 2019). Moreover, a number of research and projects have also highlighted the importance of good cooperation and good coordination between public agencies like NAV, municipality refugee services and adult education in the municipality. The organisation of collaboration is an indirect way to influence the setting and implementation of an agenda (Røiseland & Vabo, 2016, p. 87). Nevertheless, there is no clear recipe for what is the best solution, when it comes to coordination and division of responsibility and tasks between these three units (Tronstad, 2015) and this is because it is difficult to identify an ideal way to organise the introduction programme. Looking at collaboration from a more theoretical perspective, contributions have come from a large number of disciplinary perspectives including sociology, business policy, economics, economic geography, and public policy and so on. These disciplinary perspectives are derived from a large number of theoretical bases including institutional theory, social work analysis, evolutionary theory, resource-dependence theory, transaction cost economics and critical management studies (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p. 10).

There are namely three different approaches that have been used quite frequently to address the practise of collaboration and the first of these approaches focuses on describing the

collaboration process and conceptualises it in terms of phases or stages in a life cycle. Although there are a large number of versions of the phases, Rosabeth Moss Kanter's version for example invokes the often used metaphor of alliance as "marriage" (Kanter, 1994). Kanter argues that successful alliances generally unfold in five overlapping phases, namely; courtship, engagement, housekeeping, bridging and old married (in which each organisation realises how much they have changed as a result of the alliance). However, although Huxham and Vangen have some sympathy to such an approach, they tend to steer from it because while they recognise that collaborations do change and develop and so move through different phases in their life, they do not see commonality in the particular phases experienced by the various collaborations they encounter. In the same light of thinking, they also have reservations about the appropriateness of "marriage" as a metaphor for collaboration because collaboration situations are both structural and emotional unlike marriage situations (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p. 10).

Furthermore, a second common approach is based on the identification of attributes, conditions or factors that, if present, will determine the chances that the collaboration will perform well or badly. This is some sort of prerequisite to collaboration. Some of these attributes to good performance as identified by many researchers are namely; inclusion of stakeholders, partner selection, mutual trust, honesty and reliability, shared vision, mutual interdependence, open mind communication, appropriate distribution of power, political influence, appropriate governance structure, etc. On the other hand, poor performance factors include personal agendas and individual egos, politicking, poor managerial relationships, geographical distances and cultural differences.

Leadership in general is also very important in such collaborations and sometimes most poor performances stem from poor leadership. Huxham and Vangen describes leadership in collaboration as "what makes things happen". This means that in collaborative setting, enacting leadership can mean influencing whole organisations rather than just individuals, which is why it is far from straightforward to translate mainstream theories of leadership to collaborative settings (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p. 202). Even though there are variations of literature concerning leadership in collaboration, there is usually a common ground when it comes to how the task of leadership in collaboration is been described. With that being said, there usually is a distinction of "structuring" of collaboration on one hand which has to do with the different types of organising and facilitation of the processes which could be seen as a system based attempt to create impact, and can therefore be defined as control while on

other hand, those “relational functions” assumed and taken care of by the leadership and in this case, the relational elements in the leadership’s task safeguarding is defined as leadership (Røiseland & Vabo, 2016, p. 86).

The importance of good leadership in the municipalities between the immigration office and the adult education schools is imperative, since it is largely up to the individual municipality to fill the introduction programme’s content. According to Anne Djuve (2017) the introduction programme is basically an empty programme and even though the law states that it must contain Norwegian education, social knowledge and work-oriented measures, take place full-time throughout the year and be designed in consultation with the participants, it is still very much up to the individual municipality and the programme advisor to put measures in the programme in addition to Norwegian education. The FAFO report also indicates that municipalities have too much freedom, (Kvittingen, 2017) and sometimes such freedom can be misused which could create a set of snowball challenges as mentioned above.

The last but not the least of the three approaches used to address the practise of collaboration is concerned with the development of tools to support collaborative workshops and similar events. This approach generally stems from researchers with bases in strategy processes or management science. They are often concerned with the development and use of modelling methods to support the exploration of issues such as stakeholder management and alternative problem definitions that are particularly relevant to collaborative situations (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, pp. 10-11). It is no longer enough for public administration and public governance to be legal, rational, efficient, planned and coordinated. Instead the protagonists and advocates of New Public Management persistently argue that public organisations should be subject to constant and deliberate changes that optimise their operation and functioning vis-a-vis the social and political demands advanced by citizens in their capacity as “users,” “customers,” or “stakeholders.” (Tredgold, 2018, p. 26). This is where the concept of innovation comes in and in relation to integration, innovation in the public sector and its integration measures are needed in order to consolidate the integration process for immigrants. An adequate definition describes innovation as “an intended but inherently contingent process that involves the development and realisation and frequently also the spread of new creative ideas that challenges conventional wisdom and disrupts the established practices within a specific context (Torfing, 2016, pp. 29-30) A new era requires new thinking and with the increase of immigrants in Norway, there has been an enormous need for new

ideas and ways to integrate these immigrants or simply ways to make the already existing ideas and measures better, which all falls under the canopy of innovation.

In the study of collaborative innovation, Torfing (2016) makes us understand that innovation happens in five cycles, which starts with “defining problems and challenges” in need of innovation and then the “generation of ideas”. Thirdly the “selection of ideas” fourthly the “implementation of new ideas” and lastly the “dissemination of practises” The five phases in the innovation cycle do not always follow neatly after each other in a well-ordered and linear fashion; instead, they are often repeated, rearranged, combined, and integrated in complex processes with many leaps and feedback loops. Nevertheless, the five phases of the innovation cycle are important building blocks in the complex, iterative, and messy processes of innovation (Torfing, 2016, p. 35).

Entzinger (2002) points out that integration of immigrants and minority groups in Western countries usually fail because the authorities do not integrate these new society members in all the necessary arenas. According to him, there are namely three central arenas which are fundamental for community interaction and fellowship which are nation (society), state and market and this is because these three elements are interconnected and they must therefore be considered in order for integration to succeed. Since the laws, principles and rules of the state are built on the culture and choices of the majority, the authorities should also ensure that the culture of the minority is included in designing societal management tools. Again, in order to succeed with the integration of immigrants in the society, the authorities and government in general have an obligation to implement rules and laws that protect immigrants from discrimination in the labour market in particular and the society in general. This should also be implemented on more micro or individual levels since many employers have a tendency of subconsciously or even consciously employing people with whom they share the same culture and values and sometimes even look like them, which is why statistics still show high unemployment rates among immigrants in western countries (Entzinger, 2002). Even though it is imperative that collaboration between the municipalities and immigration offices or even NAV needs to be strengthened and better, it is still very important that employers and local businesses in the private sector especially, get more involved and also get more responsibility in this processes, especially when we know for a fact that many employers are sceptical about employing immigrants for many different reasons (Bjerck & Eide, 2019).

All public services is about creating value for users (Bason, 2009) and by involving users systematically in designing new solutions, the municipalities get an insight into how users themselves perceive the services and whether they meet their actual needs. Through systematic user involvement and collaboration, one can improve the coordination of service systems and more individually tailored measures. Just like the values of teaching becomes best with the student`s active participation, one of the premises is that the integration of immigrants is best done through active participation, so that it is individually adapted (Bjerck & Eide, 2019). This could for example be seen in the collaboration between the participants of the introduction programme and their contact persons or advisors in general, especially in the creation of their individually adapted plans.

2.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

To accomplish the main objective of this study and help shed light on the research questions to a reasonable extent. This chapter has focused on discussing the relevant theoretical perspectives on which this whole study is built upon, like for example discussing the relationship between the Norwegian welfare state and immigration and also the roles played by the welfare state system and its institutions in the integration process of adult immigrants, the theories of inclusion and exclusion etc. Finally, I also discussed some key perspective like structure and agent which is very relevant in the two-faced integration context both a micro and macro perspective, and also very much to my specialisation in public administration. All in all, this chapter has aided in presenting some key theories in order to shape our understanding of this research study, while raising some key questions and pondering upon some dilemmas which will be dealt with in details in the analysis chapter of this thesis. In conclusion, this chapter has presented the foundation and bases in which much of the discussions and empirical findings I will later present stems from and corroborates to.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This chapter is the segment of this thesis in which the exact steps I have followed in order to test and subsequently shed light on my research question are enumerated. In this chapter, I will elaborate on my choices for using an in-depth interview as a data collection method in order to answer my research question ; *“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”*. Using in-depth interviews as the primary method of data collection for this thesis, simply aligns with the theoretical frameworks of this research study, in the sense that it is one of the best ways to get first hand information about my participants from a micro perspective. Also, a presentation of the secondary methods of data collection used will be made in this chapter. Moreover, this chapter will also include a discussion of the relationship between the research question, the method choice and the empirical theoretic and analytical perspectives I have used in this research and as Wadel points out, qualitative research methods involves a round dance between the theory, method and data (Wadel, 1991).

In following sections below, an elaboration of the epistemological approach will be made before finally presenting the different analytic methods used during the process and also discussing the quality of the project in its entirety, by presenting the strengths and weaknesses of the study, the shortcomings encountered and also the ethical aspects and generalisability of my findings.

3.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Social scientists study diverse and complex phenomena, from census data derived from hundreds of thousands of human beings, to the in-depth analysis of one individual`s social life. The purpose of studying social phenomena in society, is to produce knowledge, and in order to describe, explore and understand these social phenomena, researchers within social science use different research methodologies, which can generally be subdivided into quantitative and qualitative research methodology (Tuli, 2010). Each research methodology has its own relative weakness and strength. No single research methodology is necessarily ideal and that selection inevitable involves loss as well as gain (Schulze, 2003). The selection of research methodology depends on the paradigm that guides the research activity, more

specifically, beliefs about the nature of reality and humanity (ontology), the theory of knowledge (epistemology), and how that knowledge may be gained (methodology).

The interpretivist constructivist perspective, which is the theoretical framework for most qualitative research, sees the world as constructed, interpreted and experienced by people in their interactions with each other and with wider social systems (Maxwell, 2006). According to this paradigm, the purpose of inquiry is to understand a particular phenomenon, not to generalise to a population (Farzanfar, 2005). According to Ulin Robinson and Tolley (2004) qualitative research methodology often rely on personal contact over some period of time between the researcher and the group being studied. Building a partnership with study participants can lead to deeper insight into the context under study, adding richness and depth to the data. The fact that I am studying a social phenomenon like integration from a micro perspective, only made it more apparent for me to carry out my research qualitatively in order to achieve in-depth insight in relation to my research question and also increase the richness of my collected data.

Classic ethnographers such as Malinowski stressed the importance of talking to people to grasp their point of view, and personal accounts are seen as having central importance in social research because of the power of language to illuminate meaning. (Legard, keegan, & Kit, 2003) This power of language to illuminate meaning, is the core reason to why in this thesis, I took the approach of in-depth interviews in order to best shed light on my research question. This method of data collection seemed most relevant for this thesis because it conforms to the theoretical approach on which this thesis is built upon, namely the micro perspective approach.

The in-depth interview is often described as a form of conversation (Burgess, 1982). Indeed Sidney and Beatrice Webb described this method of interview as being “conversation with purpose”. As such, it reproduces a fundamental process through which knowledge about the social world is constructed in normal human interaction (Legard, keegan, & Kit, 2003). A key feature of in-depth interviews is their depth of focus on the individual. They provide an opportunity for detailed investigation of each personal perspective, for in-depth understanding of the personal context within which the research phenomenon is located, and for very detailed subject coverage. They are the only way to collect data where it is important to set the perspectives heard within the context of personal history or experience: where delicate or

complex issues need to be explored at a detailed level, or where it is important to relate issues to individual personal circumstances (Legard, Keegan, & Kit, 2003).

Kvale (1996), puts forward two alternative positions on in-depth interviewing. The first, which he summarises as the “miner metaphor” falls broadly within a modern social science research model which sees knowledge as “given”. “knowledge is understood as buried metal and the interviewer is a miner who unearths the valuable metal... the knowledge is waiting in the subjects interior to be uncovered, uncontaminated by the miner...”. (Kvale, 1996, s. 3) The second approach, which Kvale calls the “traveller metaphor” falls within the constructivist research model in which knowledge is not given, but is created and negotiated. The interviewer is seen as a traveller who journeys with the interviewee. Through conversation, the interviewer leads the subject to new insight. Both positions were equally relevant to my interviewing process as outlined by Kvale. In order to enrich my data and findings, I had to somehow gamble with my sample, in the sense that I had to critically choose informants that I believed had the relevant knowledge buried in them, for me to simply unearth this information out of them. On the other hand, knowledge was also being created through the back and forth conversation between me and my informants which generally came forth through the new set of questions and follow up questions I asked during the interviews.

Even though I successfully interviewed ten informants as my primary method of data collection, I still needed to do some secondary data research in order to shed light on the background of the study and draw similarities or differences between my research and other published research around the subject matter. In qualitative research, it is common to make use of document analysis as background data or additional resources in addition to the interviews or participant observation one carries out primarily (Tjora, 2012, s. 162). Also, document analysis is used to gather information that can help identify or shed more light on the phenomenon we are studying (Blaikie, 2010).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a document that the researcher develops and which serves as a guideline or plan that explains how the research will be carried out (Blaikie, 2010, s. 13). This will help the researcher to have control over what he or she is about to study or research, and it should be designed at the very beginning of the research. The whole essence behind what a

research design should entail varies from one researcher to another. Miles Huberman and Saldana (2014) for example, state that a qualitative research design should have the research question or objective, case which will be studied, instruments for data collection and how data will be collected and analysed. On the other hand, Blaikie (2010) suggest that the researcher should create a research design that includes all the elements in which the research project rest upon, which are the project title, phenomena, or social problems one seeks to shed light on, motives and goals/objectives for the research, research question, research strategy to answer the research question, paradigms, theories, data types and sources sample of informants, data collection and analysis (Blaikie, 2010, ss. 16-25). The research process for qualitative researchers is emergent. This means that the initial plan for the research cannot be tightly prescribed, and that all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data. For example the question may change, the form of data collection may be altered, and the individuals studied and the site visited may be modified during the process of conducting the study.

The key idea behind qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from participants and engage in the best practices to obtain that information. This thesis is based on understanding the negotiation process of integration from the point of view of the participants attending the introduction programme, which is why in-depth interviews were carried out in order to get an insight from a participant perspective. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (1994), distinguish between two types of research design in the field of qualitative research methods, which are “tight and loose research design”. A tight research design involves narrowly restricted questions and strictly determined selection procedures. The degree of openness in the field of investigation and the empirical material will remain limited. The authors see such design as appropriate when researchers lack experience of qualitative research, when the research operates on the basis of narrowly defined constructs, or when it is restricted to the investigation of particular relationships in familiar context. Loose designs on the other hand are characterised by less defined concepts and have, in the beginning hardly any fixed methodological procedures. Tight design makes it easier to decide which data are relevant for the investigation. They make it easier to compare and summarise data from different interviews or observations. (Flick, 2011). In this research study, I decided to make use of a “tight” research design for some of the reasons enumerated above. This thesis is based on the integration of adult immigrants in the Norwegian society, a phenomenon and research area

which has been extensively studied from different perspectives, which also explains why a tight research design was most relevant for this research study.

3.4 RESEARCH POSITIONALITY

I have always looked at the notion of integration as a subjective one, meaning integration simply is what the person being integrated wants it to be. Integration is also obviously an objective notion, since there is a universal understanding of what this term can or may entail, like for example, integration is universally understood as “being part of the majority as a minority”. However, the details of this “being part” is that which makes this notion quite subjective. An immigrant can be part of a society by working and paying tax, speaking the language and so on, but at the same time excludes themselves from the culture and values of the majority. We quite often confuse the notion of integration to that of assimilation and sometimes these two notions are used interchangeably. However, integration is far from assimilation because integration does not advocate losing ones identity, values or culture.

As an immigrant, I can boldly affirm that I stand in a better position to understand other immigrants, because I have walked in the same path as they have, even though our directions and journeys might have been different, the fundamentals remains the same. Experience is the best teacher they say, which is why I seek to understand the practicalities behind the integration of adult immigrants in Norway from a different perspective to that which I have personally journeyed through and in the same light understand the thin line which separates the theory and reality of this integration processes in Norway.

Central to scholarly discussions within the field of feminist epistemology is the question of a researcher`s positionality and the subsequent impact on knowledge production. In the article “exploring the interactive space of the “outsider within”, Yan Zhao reflects upon how her positionality and situatedness as an immigrant researcher mattered in the production of knowledge. (Zhao, 2015) One of the most important consideration for a researcher is the position they occupy in relation to the research setting, the participants in the research and the data analysis and presentation. Meighan and Siraj Blatchford (1997:289) talk about taking a “stance” in research, and how important it is to understand what this stance means in relation to our research outcome. At the beginning of this thesis, namely in the general introduction chapter, I discussed my motivation for this particular study and in doing so, I explained that one of the things which triggered my thirst for knowledge or interest around the subject

matter was the fact that I am an immigrant myself. As a researcher, I was very much aware of the importance of my positionality in relation to the outcome of my research since the concept of researchers having a position has implications that reach far beyond the theoretical understandings, as the position that a researcher takes, knowingly or unknowingly can have impact not only on the research design, but also on the ethical nature of the research process itself (Curtis & Shields, 2014). I also understood from a critical perspective that my positionality could be a disadvantage in the sense that It may create a biased mindset and blindness to the ordinary (Chavez, 2008) however, as Patricia Hill Collins states, the “outsider within” position constitutes a privileged position from which to gain deeper insights, and, second, it is legitimate to include my own personal and cultural biographies within my study (Collins, 2004), which is why my positionality as an immigrant in this research was more of an advantage than a disadvantage.

3.5 SAMPLE SELECTION (RECRUITING INFORMANTS)

One of the most important requirements to all research, or more rightfully said to the presentation of the research, is connected to transparency. How a research is done, which decisions are made at which times, how the informants are recruited, which problems that have been encountered, the type of theory used and how these has all worked out, just to name a few (Tjora, 2017, s. 248). Since conducting a research requires absolute transparency, it is imperative that this transparency starts with the recruitment of the informants used in the research. This in effects means that, before I went on to recruit my informants, I drafted what is known as a consent letter. In this letter, I explained the whole background and idea behind the study, my research question and purpose for the research, how the research was to be carried out and what the research will be used for. It is also important to mention that the informant is anonymised from the general public before, during and after the interview and they could also freely withdraw themselves at any given moment without any given reason. As a researcher, these are predicaments one has to be prepared for. When carrying out an in-depth interview, the researcher has an ethical obligation to protect the informant’s privacy by making sure that the informant is not exposed to any risky or damaging situations. This is particularly not quite common in the study of social science, however it is imperative that researchers are aware over the possibility of damage when carrying out research on very sensitive topics or issues (Tjora, 2017, s. 175)

In a qualitative research, the core rule for choosing and selecting informants is making sure that one selects informants who of different reasons can articulate and express themselves in a reflective manner concerning the topic at hand. This is called strategic selection and it differs from quantitative research in the sense that there is no random selection of respondents to represent a population, but rather a more calculative selection of people or informants that fit the need and description for the research (Tjora, 2017, s. 130). One of the difficult challenges with conducting a research has to deal with how a researcher delimitates the empirical work and this is because researchers in qualitative research usually work in depth with relatively few strategic selected units. This is why when making use of generalisation, as a result of the units which are relevant to us not being directly represented, we have to concretely explain the reason for our delimitation (Tjora, 2017, s. 40). There are therefore namely two strategies used in delimiting a project. The first strategy is either by using a case study or on the other hand by picking out or inviting participants to a research from special criteria, known as a sample (Tjora, 2017, s. 41). A case study is usually a very widespread form for delimitation in qualitative studies, which implies that a case study is a research that makes use of already existing limitations for who and what the research will include or exclude (Tjora, 2017, s. 41). In the case of my research, the limitation is the “adult immigrants” who are actively participating in the introduction programme and also about integration in the Norwegian society specifically. Sampling of participants should be based on the research question and objective and also the theory, in order to gather relevant and important knowledge for the research (Miles, 2014). Sometimes not all knowledge is readily available even for those who bear them, which is why a qualitative research can contribute in bringing out such implicit knowledge (Nohl et al. 2014: 276), which also conforms to what Kvale calls the “traveller metaphor” within the constructivist research model as I earlier mentioned.

It is not uncommon that the recruitment of informants is difficult and the researcher is left thinking or having the feeling that there is something important or a vital experience that has not been researched on due to the lacking of informants that are actually wanted or needed (Tjora, 2017, s. 132). I personally faced such setbacks in the process of recruiting my informants, not because they were not willing to participate in the research, but simply because it was difficult to actually get a hold of them due to busy schedules either from my part or theirs. However, after I successfully got my first informant, he helped me get five more in less than a week creating a snowball effect, (Michael, Lewis-Beck, & Bryman, 2004) which also eventually connected me to the Principal of the school and some other teachers

who helped me get the rest of my informants. All my informants were willing and happy to participate, I was, however fully aware of the fact that it is important to reflect over the reasons why informants freely chose to participate in a study like this, since there can be several reasons that attracts these participants. Sometimes potential informants chose to participate out of the need to express their feelings and speak out on issues that pre-occupy them for several reasons, while others chose to participate for more trivial reasons like winning a gift if for example that was one of the advantages of participating. Thus, it is imperative for a researcher to be aware of these reasons in order not to choose participants that can in a long run ruin or weaken the research`s credibility (Tjora, 2017, s. 138). Whatever the case may be, it is important to show appreciation to the informants who take their time to be a part of ones research (Tjora, 2017, s. 139), something which I wholeheartedly did.

3.6 THE INTERVIEWS

Interviews deal with an interpretation of the past based on the choices the informant has taken or not taken, and enables post-rationalisation (Sollund, 2004). The first step into the process of conducting an interview for a qualitative research is creating an interview guide (In appendix 1). As self-explanatory as it is, an interview guide is simply a set of questions and hints that guides a researcher before, during and even after the interview. According to Aksel Tjora, interview guides are used to structure in-depth interviews. These can be made up of unformulated questions, hints or keywords in general (Tjora, 2017, s. 153) Usually, an in-depth interview can be structured in many different ways, but most a times, it always almost happens in three phases which are the warm up phase, the reflection phase and finally the conclusion phase which usually entails different types of questions and different degrees of expected reflection from the part of the informant (Tjora, 2017, s. 145).

The decision on which type of interview I was to conduct was easy to make, and also the type of interview guide I wanted to make use of. I decided to use a theme-based interview guide which meant that my interview will be divided into different themes which will help to better organise the interviewing process and also keep me grounded during the interviews. As a result of this decision, I ended up with an interview guide that included four different themes with the very first one being the introduction and background questions around the concept of integration, secondly, the impact of the introduction programme, thirdly, the challenges faced during the process of integration in general and with the introduction programme in particular

and last but not the least, the opportunities created and also a set of round up questions. The interview guide was structured in these four different themes in order to make it easier for both me as the interviewer on one hand and the informant or interviewee on the other hand to retain control over several questions (Tjora, 2017, s. 157). Even though the informant is free to speak within and around other themes during the interview, it is easier to introduce a new set of questions to the informant by for example telling them “we are now going to talk about the impact of the introduction programme on your life in Norway” and with this information, the informant`s mind is immediately conditioned to answer and reflect over questions that has to deal with that particular theme (Tjora, 2017, ss. 157-158).

An in-depth interview ideally has a free and unformal connotation, something which can easily be disturbed by an interview guide. However, we must still have it at the back of our minds that the informant who decides to participate in an in-depth interview, already expects to answer a set of questions from the interviewer, rather than talking and reflecting on everything freely (Tjora, 2017, s. 158). In order to further guide the informants, I also included some guides and hints beside questions that where not entirely direct or questions that needed further reflection. Some informants naturally talk and reflect around the topic at hand without needing an extra hint or guide, meanwhile other informants need these guides which could also lead to follow up questions in order to reflect to the best of their ability. This is why being prepared for such situations is imperative and it is important to therefore have these follow up questions or hints in cases where they might be needed. Another interesting way in getting the most out of the informant according to Tjora(2017) is to simply wait with the follow up question and allow silence to take its course in the room, which will create some sort of cold atmosphere and eventually the informant will want to get out of this atmosphere by talking or elaborating more on their answers. This interviewing tactic demands courage on the part of the interviewer, but it is definitely worth trying (Tjora, 2017, s. 146) and that is exactly what I did.

3.6.1. Before the Interviews

A major prerequisite for succeeding with an in-depth interview is that one should try to create a relaxing atmosphere where the informant feels comfortable to freely speak on very personal issues, where it is allowed to think aloud and where digressions are allowed(Tjora, 2017, s. 118). With this guideline in place, conducting my interviews in a noisy area or around people was really not an option, since in such situations, people can sometimes feel reserved or afraid

of being judged for their opinions, and reflections are generally limited for this reason. Prior to my interviews, or even this research, I had not met or had any physical contact with any of my informants, which meant that some sort of connection had to be created and ice had to be broken in order for them to feel comfortable expressing themselves and reflecting over sensitive issues, which they will otherwise feel uncomfortable talking about. As a result of this, I had to channel my inner social and communicational skills, in order to make my informants very comfortable around me, so that they can freely and deeply express themselves without wanting to hold back. I also came to the realisation that my informants felt comfortable around me because they could relate more to me being a young immigrant living the dream they wish and aspire to live in the future. I was some sort of “outsider within” as Yan Zhao (2015) explains and through my positionality as an immigrant researcher, my informants could easily relate to me.

During the entire process of the interviews, I frequented the school which my informants attended and sometimes went there just to have a chat and to plan the next interviews. I gave all my ten informants the opportunity to choose a location for the interview, since it is alright to let them make this decision (Tjora, 2017, s. 121). Most interviews were carried out in the school, during launch breaks, with the exception of two of the interviews which was conducted in a café. Even though an in-depth interview sometimes looks like an informal meeting with two people discussing over a cup of coffee or tea, it is always the interviewers or researchers’ job and responsibility to decide the frames of the entire interview. Usually the informant has expectations that the interviewer will ask direct questions which demands direct answers. It is almost always inevitable that both the informant and the interviewer will have pre-conceived expectations prior to the interview (Tjora, 2017, s. 119). Knowing that my informants were of different ages ranging from 20-32 years and coming from different countries with different backgrounds and mindsets and also different aspirations for their futures in Norway, simply meant that I had no idea what to expect and I could say the same for them. However, the more interviews I conducted, the more I saw similarities in their thoughts and expressions regardless of their fundamental differences.

Moreover, before we kick started the interview properly, I had to decide how the interviews will be carried out and how the data I collect will be registered or noted down. Generally, what we use in conducting an in-depth interview is usually an audio recorder. This gives us a certainty that we are actually getting all that is being said, while we can at the same time concentrate ourselves more on the informant who is speaking which creates good

communication and overall flow in the interview while asking for an elaboration or more reflection when needed (Tjora, 2017, s. 166). Furthermore, deciding to make use of an audio recorder is not a despotic decision but rather a democratic one, meaning the interviewer is obligated to ask for permission from the informant before the interview can be proceeded with. We must at all cost always ask the informant if it is alright to record them during the interview and it is our responsibility to inform the informant on how these recording will be kept, and how they will be will analysed, where they will be kept or saved and finally when the recording will be deleted (Tjora, 2017, s. 167). After explaining everything that was to be done, all my informants gave me their full consent and greenlight for recording the interviews. Finally, another thing we should take into consideration when recording an interview, is making sure that the audio recorder which in this case was my mobile phone, is relatively discrete and can record the interview entirely without needing any sort of technical attention, because these might raise some scepticism even in informants who have fully given their consent to the audio recording. In cases where this should happen, it is also imperative to make sure that any technical issues arising should not cause any fuss or distractions of any sort. (ibid.). I was very much aware and prepared for such predicaments, so I took preventive precautions to make sure that the interviews went smoothly.

3.6.2. During the Interviews

Now that me and my informants were sitting face to face in front of each other, there was nothing else left but to get into the interview proper. The atmosphere was usually calm and even though I could see that my informants were ready to get into a trade of words, I could always sense some sort of uncertainty in them or sometimes fear of not being able to be as helpful as they thought I expected them to. This fear sometimes translated in them saying “I cannot speak English well” for example. However, as I earlier mentioned, it was just a matter of breaking the ice, before laughter and comfort clouded the room. All my interviews started with the introductory phase in order to open the floor and walk ourselves into the deeper parts of the interview slowly but surely. The deeper we get, the more the need for reflection. My first Informant for example was a very intelligent guy and one thing I knew for sure before the interview was that I was going to get refined answers that were well reflected upon and this had a lot to do with his educational background. After the introductory stage, comes the reflection stage which is where we invite the informant to take us with in their rhetoric in what is known as the “grand tour questions” (Tjora, 2017, s. 146). This is the part of any interview that determines the riches and quality of the data the researcher will be left with at the end of

the interview. This is why it is important to carefully chose or select informants that can easily express themselves and reflect over the topic at hand which again is known as a strategic selection (Tjora, 2017, s. 130). In order to ensure good quality of an interview, it is important to ask questions that encourages the informant to come up with concrete and outstanding reflections around the topic which the interview is about. (Thagaard, 2018, s. 95)

My interview guide was filled with hints and guides which enabled me to not only guide myself but also hint my informants on how or which direction I expected them to reflect on. The issue with questions that need reflection is that, informants can sometimes reflect from a different perspective of that which is relevant to your research, which is why these hints and guides are very essential to have. However, reflecting outside the box is not entirely a bad thing all the time, because it also subconsciously brings the interviewer into a new arena of thoughts that might be relevant to the study which is why we use what we call “follow up questions”. The further my informants and I went in to the conversation, and the deeper they reflected over a certain topic, the more I came up with instantaneous follow up questions to make them reflect even more (Tjora, 2017, s. 158).

As an interviewer, listening and carefully paying attention is an art that should be mastered. The quality of an in-depth interview lies on the gained trust between the researcher and the informant, something which is very important especially when we are researching on sensitive topics. Carefully listening without interrupting the informant makes them feel listened and understood which is exactly why I decided to be a good listener during my interviews. My first interview lasted approximately one hour and the reason is because the interview is not suppose to be too long that it weighs out the informant (Tjora, 2017, s. 116) especially taking into account that the informant is doing you a favour by participating. However, some of my interviews lasted almost two hours , which was not because of the questions I asked, but rather because of the answers which the informants were willing to give. I sometimes felt like a psychologist in some cases, because most of my informants had a lot to share and reflect on, and since I had the time to listen, I made sure I listened. At the end of the day, it only enriched my data more.

The final phase during my interviews known as the round up phase, was used to take away the attention from the reflection phase and in this case to normalise the situation between the me and the informants. At the end of each interview, I had to again inform my informants about the next stages of the research, how the data will be used and when the research will be

completed, so that they can know when to expect a feedback from me. (Tjora, 2017, ss. 146-147). It took me approximately one week to conduct my first five interviews and another three weeks to get the last five informants and conduct the remaining interviews. Sometimes I conducted two interviews in one day in order to maximise time.

3.6.3 Transcription

When making use of an in-depth interview in a qualitative research, the use of an audio recorder and a complete transcription of the data material is imperative. However as mentioned by Kvale (1997), there is no objective translation from verbal or oral to written form, which is why he suggests that we consider transcribing our data in regard to what is important in that concrete situation. However, the issue usually lies in the fact that we do not always know which important topics to work with or what is the appropriate detail level when working with the transcription (Tjora, 2017, s. 173). Most transcriptions only entails the verbal language and not the context in its entirety or even body language, eye contact or general feel of that which could be the reason behind what is said (Nilssen, 2012, s. 47). Now that I was seated with a reasonable amount of audio data which was between one to two hours of recording on average for all my ten interviews, I was left with the dilemma on deciding which data to transcribe or which not to. The process of transcribing an audio file into written words is a very longsome and tiring one, and sometimes even boring. Transcribing is a time-consuming process (Nilsen 2014:47). However, it is an inevitable part of the whole ordeal. I came across a number of software I could use to easily transcribe my data at low cost, nevertheless, I decided to do the transcribing by myself. The advantages of transcribing yourself are so numerous that the time aspect is the only reason that can make one consider otherwise. This is because transcribing is first and foremostly a very important part of the analytic process (Nilsen 2014:47). Since it is hard to know which part of the data will at the end of the day be important for the analyses or add value to the research, It is simply smart to transcribe everything that is at our disposal and eventually discard the data which is less needed (Tjora, 2017, s. 174). With this information at the back of my mind, it was only a matter time before I even transcribed the breath my informants took when they were speaking. This is a metaphoric way of simply saying that every word or sound was penned down and it took me approximately two to three hours to careful transcribe each interview

which I later archived and was ready to continue the process by analysing the findings from the data material.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Even though the analysis of qualitative research starts at the very beginning of the research and lives with us throughout the entire process, there will always come a time where we need to make what we call a final analysis (Nilssen, 2012, s. 101). However, the researchers epistemological perspective has a lot of consequences for the choice of the methodology and analytic process (Mik-Meyer & Järvinen, 2005). In the words of Tjora, it is in the analysing phase that the researcher really has to use his or her intellectual capacity and creativity (Tjora, 2017, s. 195) Qualitative analyses demands a lot of critical thinking work, sensitivity for that which is found in the empirical beyond the research question and expectations and also the ability to be able to work systematically (Ibid). In order not to «jump into conclusions» in the analytic process or avoiding premature conclusions, Tjora (2017, s 196) suggests the use of the SDI (stegvis-deductiv inductiv) strategy or method to reduce moments of panic that can occur before the analytic process by believing in the empirical and taking things step by step. In order to avoid such instances of panic, the deductive qualitative analysis (DQA) approach was therefore used in this study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) posits that the deductive researcher “works form the “top down”, from a theory to hypotheses, to data, to add or contradict the theory”. While the «upward» process is known as *inductive*, where one works from the data to the theory. Furthermore, Using the SDI model through the coding phase, we extract the essence in the empirical material, and reduce the volume of the material or date and lastly facilitate the generation of idea on the basis of details in the empirical (Tjora, 2017).

3.7.1 Coding and Categorising

Codes are labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to data «chunks» of varying size and can take the form of a straightforward, descriptive label or a more evocative and complex one. (e.g., a metaphor) (Miles, Huberm, & Johnny, 2014). Saldaña (2013) divides coding into two major stages; First cycle and second cycle codes. First cycle coding methods are codes initially assigned to the data chunks while second cycle coding methods generally work with resulting first cycle codes themselves. There are namely three elemental methods that serve as

foundation approaches to coding which are ; descriptive, In Vivo, and Process coding. Briefly explained, a descriptive code assign labels to data to summarize in a word or short phrases, most often a noun, the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data. On the other hand, In Vivo coding which is one of the most well-known qualitative coding methods, uses words or short phrases form the participant`s own language in the data record as codes. Finally, the process coding method which uses gerund («i-ing» words) exclusively to connote observable and conceptual action in the data. Processes also imply actions intertwined with the dynamics of time (Miles, Huberm, & Johnny, 2014). In this research study, I decided to make use of the In vivo coding to a greater extent, since the essence here is for the coding to portray concrete situations from the data set by isolating what the informant is actually saying and not just what they are talking about. These types of codes can by themselves contribute to pointing out interesting aspects in the next stages of the analytic process (Tjora, 2017, s. 201).

After one is done with the first cycle coding, it is usually imperative to categorise these codes. The essence of using categories after coding, is to create a sense of meaning in the data material which can eventually give us answers to the research question. (Nilssen, 2014, s. 85) Pattern Coding as it is also called, is a second cycle method which is used in grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, or constructs. These are explanatory and inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration or explanation. They pull a lot of material from first cycle coding into more meaningful and parsimonious units of analysis (Miles, Huberm, & Johnny, 2014).

The first thing I did in my coding process, was to make it easy for me to have an overview over my informants and the interview questions and answers which I transcribed by first of all highlighting all my question in red , then secondly using code numbers like I01 to indicate informant 1 and I02 to indicate informant 2 and so on, with their answers to the questions right beside the code numbers. Coding is a back and forth process which involves reading the data material a repeated amount of times (Nilssen, 2012, s. 84). After discovering what was most interesting and relevant to my research and study and also picking out the sections of the data I wanted to code, I decided to highlight or associate a colour to each code and these codes were sorted out into themes like: Background, Impacts, understanding integration, challenges, responsibility and prospects. Having highlighted these codes for easier identification, I then attached a piece of text under the respective codes with relevant citations in order to get a better grasp of what the material I have can mean or indicate to me. To continue with, a characteristic of the SDI-models coding is that it should be very close to the

empirical and also use words or phrases that one can already find in the data material known as “inborn phrases” in what is called “in vivo” coding (Tjora, 2017, s. 197). As a result, I found some codes that were more informative and detailed and that could give out more information about what the informant is saying rather than just information about what the informant is talking about like in the theme based coding for example (Tjora, 2017, s. 201). When it came to coding my data through a text based coding method which obviously gives more insight to the analytic process, I had to make sure that I used text from the data that was most relevant to my research question and I for example ended up with codes like: “feel like part of the society”, “things became better”, “we have mutual responsibility”, “the introduction programme has helped me with the language”, etc. I was at the end of this coding process left with a handful of text-based codes from my interviews and in order to make the process even more transparent, I further broke these codes into categories. The essence of using these categories is to create a sense of meaning in the data material which can eventually give me answers to my research question (Nilssen, 2014, s. 85). However, these categories were codes taken from the interview data and not the same categories I had already used in my interview guide before and during the interview. An example of a category which I eventually came up with was “journey to integration” which I could use to sum up answers from the interview about how my informants are gradually paving their way to the level of integration which they personally desire and which is also generally expected of them. Another category I used was “encountering setbacks” which I used to sum up the set of challenges my informants faced in the introduction programme primarily and also as immigrants living in Norway from different perspectives and so on. If one could make a code before the coding process, then one should definitely consider making new codes, and the codes we come up with should be a reflection of a concrete or specific content from the interview and what was said in it. A good text-based SDI-coding method is therefore basis for the continuation of the analytic process and it distinguishes itself from other types of “a priori” coding where a finished set of codes are created before the analysis takes place (Tjora, 2017, s. 203).

To sum things up, the whole process of coding and categorising was quite interesting, even though time consuming, it enabled me to get more acquainted with my data material and to know especially what was useful for my analyses or not. It is generally agreed that if a researcher is not fully familiar with his data material, the process of coding becomes extremely difficult. I conducted my interviews myself and I knew what my data material

entailed, which made me manoeuvre myself through the data material much easier. Sorting out useful data into theme-based codes was very easy, however creating a more detailed coding format like that text-based code was more time consuming since I had many words to play around with from the data material and could sometimes get confused on which part of the text was most relevant to the empirical and what gave a better portrait of what my informant was saying and not just what they were talking about in relation to my research question.

3.8 THE RESEARCH QUALITY

In the study of qualitative and quantitative research, there generally exists some criteria that indicates the quality or credibility of the research outcome or results, which are namely reliability, validity and generalisability. Reliability is usually about internal logic throughout the research project, in other words referring to the consistency in the findings, while validity deals with the logical connection between the project design and the finding, which is usually more apparent in quantitative research methods according to some researchers and lastly generalisability is linked to the scope of the research beyond the units or sample which has been examined or studied. (Tjora , 2012)

Some will argue that it is a weakness for this research or reliability of this study, that it was carried out only in one municipality or dealt with only ten informants for example, especially since the background of the study shows a lot of differences and disparities between communities in how the introduction programme is being planned and executed. A research project of this calibre could not in anyway do otherwise, which is why there was a lot of document analysis involved, in order to bring forth the similarities between this research and other researches already conducted around the topic or general facts around the subject matter. Also, qualitative research is not really about the quantity of the data collected, but rather the quality, something which I have earlier discussed.

One of the criterion to increase reliability in a research is that the researcher should avoid all factors that may influence the research and prevent the results from being credible. Neutrality or objectivity is one of these factors which is said to increase reliability. This is however considered by many to be impossible because researchers are usually part of the community they study and sometimes gain a connection and bond with the people they study. We are influenced by our experiences, interests, educational backgrounds, which can in turn influence

how we understand what we are studying (Murekatete, 2016). Considering the realms and manner in which this study was carried out, especially in regards to me studying other immigrants like myself, one can understand the lack of complete neutrality or objectivity as I earlier enumerated in the “research positionality” sub-chapter, however, for the fact that every step of the research methodology and process has been carefully and systematically documented, we can all agree that it strengthens the reliability and credibility of this study due to the complete transparency involved.

Furthermore, this study would perhaps have had a different outcome if I had also interviewed participants who have successfully completed the introduction programme, in order to compare the success rate of these immigrants after the completion of the programme and also compare their mindset to that of the people still actively participating in the programme. I had initially also thought about interviewing the officials in charge of this process, such as introduction programme teachers, contact persons at the immigration office and other officials who can give me more understanding and insight of the subject matter from their structural or macro perspective as representatives of the government and its policies, and at the same time from their personal point of views as individuals and bridges or facilitators between the structure and agent. Again the scope of this research and time frame available could not allow me to study every aspects surrounding this phenomenon. On the other hand, trying to study every aspect of a phenomenon at once doesn't exactly increase the reliability or credibility of the study either, since the focus of what is actually being studied can easily be missing. Therefore, it is important to delimitate the study to something more concrete and rather build upon it, than study a lot of aspects without arriving to any concrete observations. This is the reason why I decided to only focus on the micro perspective of adult immigrants actively participating in the introduction programme in order to answer my research question.

Tjora (2012) states that another method in which a researcher can increase reliability or credibility of a research is by presenting direct citations from the informant, which makes the informant`s voice or narrative more visible to the reader to some extent. I have made use of a lot of these direct citations in the findings and interpretation chapter of this thesis below, in relation to the theoretical perspective I have based this study on. This has been done in order to increase the reliability of this study and hence its quality.

Again, in the study of qualitative research, generalisability Is also a very important element to measure the quality of the study. Some researchers point out the fact that the generalisation

that is done based on qualitative research is different from that which is done based on quantitative research (Nadim, 2015). Qualitative research can contribute to “generalisation on the characteristics of the processes of mechanisms” (ibid:133). Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) call this an analytic generalisation, which deals with “a reasoned assessment of which extent the findings from one study can be used as a reference point or guidance for that which can happen in another situation or study” This is based on the similarities and differences between the two situations. Usually in a qualitative study, the researcher chooses or picks out a sample which will represent the whole population or the phenomenon which is being studied and eventually use the findings in this sample to generalise it to a bigger population. Researchers also differentiate between a research based and reading based analytical generalisation. The research based generalisation deals with giving a “rich and specific description” and argues for the generalisability of the results, while the reading based generalisation has to do with the reader’s task or ability to evaluate the generalisability of the study based on “detailed contextual descriptions” (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 91). My objective in this study through this thesis is not to use my sample of ten informants to represent the whole population of Norway, however I can boldly state that many of my findings in this study can be generalisable since the research gives an insight in the similar struggles and challenges faced by many immigrants in Norway, the two-faced process of integration, their relationship and contact with the general majority and the Norwegian society as a whole. Qualitative research simply focuses and puts emphases on many incidences or situations with few people involved, ahead of many people with few incidences or situations like quantitative oriented researchers do (Andenæs, 2007), which is why it is usually not necessary to have a huge numerical sample. The quality of the sample is more important than the quantity in such cases, which is why interviewing ten informants was enough in consideration to the magnitude and objective of this study.

3.9 RESEARCH ETHICS

Finally, looking at things from an ethical perspective, a researcher is expected to adhere to the principles of ethical research and this also goes a long way to increase the quality of the research. Firstly, this research was assessed by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) in accordance to the laws and regulations issued by the ministry of Education and Research. Also, during the course of this research and in order to conform to the ethical principles in qualitative research methods, I had to draft a consent letter in order for the participants to give their full consent for their participation and handling of their personal

information. Moreover, I had to make sure that the participants were fully aware of the confidentiality involved in this research, by informing them about what the data collected will be used for, how it will be handled in regards to their anonymity and also when all collected data like the audio recording will be deleted, which was to be done after the end of this Master`s thesis. The fact that my informants were made aware of their anonymity, made it easier for them to express and reflect on sensitive issues which they will otherwise not want a third party to hear or know. Almost all of my informants had a special bond with me, during the interviews, and I could sense some relief from their part after they had spoken their minds and with all this sensitive information available to me, in addition to the trust they put in me, it is only fair and legally expected of me, that I completely abide and adhere to the ethical principles of research as mentioned above.

3.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, I have presented the methodological steps used during the process of this research. In doing so, I also presented the assessment that have guided my choices for these methodological frameworks. A somewhat detailed explanation of the data collection methods was made available, which is the interviewing of ten informants, in addition to the document studies and analysis carried out. Through interviewing my informants, I gained more knowledge from their personal narratives, mindset, feedbacks and most importantly a micro perspective of integration and the impacts of the introduction programme on their integration process, most of which will be discussed in the next chapter of this thesis. Furthermore, I also presented the methods used in the data analytic process of this research, which ranged from the transcription of the audio recorded data, to the methods of coding and categorising and the general analytic approach known as the deductive qualitative analysis (DQA) and or the SDI method developed by Tjora Aksel. In the end of the chapter, I discussed the quality of the research, by presenting the strength and weaknesses of the research, its reliability and generalisability and also the ethical aspects which I have adhered to throughout this process. In conclusion, the whole point for this chapter has been to present a relationship between the research question, the theoretical perspectives and methodological process and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In order to answer my research question, I will in this segment make sense of the information accumulated from my informants and interpret the empirical findings from my data analysis. This chapter is divided into three sub chapters namely, impact, challenges and opportunities created from attending the introduction programme, which enables me to carefully and systematically answer my research question *“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”*,

4.2 IMPACTS OF THE INTRODUCTION PROGRAMME ON ITS PARTICIPANTS

As I earlier mentioned in the theoretical chapter, the main task for good integration is to reduce boundaries, differences or gaps between the minority and the majority within important areas that are central in the Norwegian culture like equality, secularism, education etc (Valenta & Bunad, 2010). This is why the aim of the integration policy in Norway is to provide opportunities for immigrants to participate in the workforce and in community life. This is important for the immigrants themselves as well as to maintain a robust and sustainable welfare system (Thorud, 2017, s. 8). The introduction programme has so far been considered one of, if not the best integration measures implemented in Norway, as it conforms to the aim of the integration policy mentioned above, by preparing its participants for either education or participation in the workforce and hence community life. My quest through out this research study has been to understand how the immigrants who participate in the introduction programme, go from non integrated individuals who can barely speak Norwegian to being part of the Norwegian society either through education or by working. During the process of my data collection, which entailed interviewing ten informants who are actively participating in the introduction programme, one of my core preoccupations, was understanding how these participants are being affected and impacted by their active participation in the introduction programme. The theoretical framework of this thesis relies on the micro perspective of my informants in regards to their thoughts, feedbacks, and general observations about their time and involvement in the introduction programme. According to

my findings, the three main arenas of impact during the negotiation process of integration for my informants, is language proficiency, socio-cultural and economic impacts. I also chose to focus my analyses on these three impacts because it aligns with the theoretical perspectives which I earlier discussed. A further elaboration will be made in the next segments below.

4.2.1 Language Proficiency

108: "They told me that language is the key to integration..."

Just like what informant 108 posits, studies in Norway have indicated that language training is an important component of the introduction programme leading to employment, but also that the quality of language training is subject to variations (Djuve et al. 2017). The investment of language training might not increase employment in the short term, but it can have positive long-term effects (Chiswick & Miller, 2014), which means that language proficiency clearly remains a key driver for immigrant integration as it increases job opportunities and also facilitates social and political participation (Hanemann, 2019). One cannot study the phenomenon of integration and at the same time ignore the importance of language as one of the key tools to integration especially in the context of Norway, which is why I chose to tackle language proficiency in this chapter. Learning the Norwegian language is seen in Norway as one of the most important tools for the integration of immigrants, which is also why the core focus of the introduction programme is language training. Before arriving to Norway, none of my informants spoke or understood the Norwegian language. This is not unusual because Norwegian is a language only spoken and recognised in Norway and Scandinavia at most. This means that every immigrant who has made it a choice to be an active part of the Norwegian society, must learn the language in order not to be constantly lost in translation. Understanding ones surrounding, being able to express oneself and also being able to understand the expression of others is an imperative aspect of fitting in - something which will be impossible without speaking or understanding the language. Almost every adult immigrant living in Norway who speaks Norwegian has gone through a Norwegian language learning process which is usually the first steps to integration. In my research study, all of my informants were active members of the introduction programme which focuses on teaching them the Norwegian language, in addition to social, cultural and even political lessons. Understanding how the introduction programme impacted my informants from a language perspective was therefore very important, since their integration in Norway significantly lies on their ability to speak the language.

During my interviews, one of the key questions I asked was about how my informants felt in regards to their Norwegian language skills after the short period of time they had lived in Norway and attended the introduction programme. I also wanted to know how important they thought language was when it came to their integration process. One thing which was unanimously agreed on by all my ten informants was the uncompromising importance of speaking the Norwegian language. Some informants had a good feeling about their personal language skills, while others admitted they still had a lot to learn, however one of my informants explained that the level of language training the introduction programme offered was only sufficient for those who intended to join the labour market rather than study after they completed. In the words of informant 104;

104: "I can speak on a basic level, like socially, but when I want to speak academically, things become very difficult. The introduction programme prepares you mostly for the work life because when you have A2 it is enough to join the labour market in Norway, but it really does not prepare you for the academic life..."

Informant 104 was one of my informants who had a good job back in his home country and this could perhaps explain the high degree of expectation he has in regards to the language training and his personal language skills. It is not necessarily a fact that the immigrants participating in the introduction programme with a high level of education from their home countries are more impatient than their counterparts, but Djuve et al (2017) relates participants with higher education to higher expectations; they sometimes get impatient when these expectations are not met and also they are ambitious (Kobberstad, 2019, s. 105). It is perhaps a good thing that informant 104 is aware of his language deficit and also in the process understands the utmost importance of mastering the language, something which will only enable him to keep learning.

Furthermore, one of my informants who also had a high education background and worked as a doctor in Turkey before coming to Norway expressed his feelings about his fear of not learning the Norwegian language enough, hence understanding the importance of language in not only entering the labour market but also being able to work as a doctor. In the words of informant 102 he explained that;

102: "My biggest fear is not learning Norwegian enough... I studied medicine and had many dreams... I am afraid I won't be able to work as a doctor..."

Integration policies usually aims at giving immigrants an opportunity to take part in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their new country, so that at the end of such process they can live under the same legal, social and financial conditions as natives of that country, which is why it is generally accepted that the ability to speak the language(s) of the receiving society usually plays an important part in the process of integration, because it is a precondition for participation (Krumm & Plutzar, 2004). Most of my interviews were conducted in English, a language which is widely spoken in Norway and even considered the second language in the country. Almost all my informants had an understandable and standard grasp of the English language, which made them express themselves without extra difficulties. There is an impact of the first language on second language acquisition for adult learners. It is empirically verified that in their learning strategies adult language learners make more or less conscious use of comparing language structures. There are observations that learners who already speak several languages are highly aware of language usage and therefore are supposed to be “good language learners” (Hufeisen & Fliser, 2005) Most of my informants have only lived two years in Norway and a hand full of them had not attended the introduction programme for up to a year, which means that judging their Norwegian language skills will be uncalled for, considering the short period they have lived in the country. Just like integration, language is also a never ending process. One of my informants, namely informant 105 understands this fact:

105: I think the language training continues for the rest of life, for example I learn new things everyday and I think there is a lot more I need to learn.... ”

Even Though some expressed content and satisfaction towards their language skills and mostly attributing the success to the good teaching habits from their teachers and the introduction programme curriculum in general, some of them still felt the need to honestly express their dissatisfaction:

108: Personally I am not satisfied and I blame myself for it, I think I need to learn more... read more, speak more, watch more movies for example...

People`s linguistic competences differ considerably, depending on the context in which they live and work, their learning experiences etc. How could a standardised language programme, like the introduction programme designed to lead to a specific level of linguistic competence, be effective for all and meet their different language needs? (Krumm & Plutzar, 2004). In many European countries language provision and requirement for migrants vary (from about 100 course hours to more than 600), and correspondingly the levels which have to be

achieved differ from A1 or A2 to B1; and these levels have to be reached in all language competences: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. From a scientific point of view, there is no absolute number of hours which can guarantee the attainment of a certain level of competence, especially in all these language competences. Independent of the underlying theories, researchers agree that language training is an extremely individual process depending on a rather large number of differing factors (ibid).

The Norwegian introduction programme is a two year programme and sometimes three (for special need participants), with every participants having a personally tailored plan during the course in regards to their future prospects. In 2018, the Norwegian government began a process of reforming the introduction programme with clear expectations of better results, both over the municipalities and the individual participants. The Norwegian language according to the government is the key to small and large fellowships in our society, which is why stricter requirements for the Norwegian language are made. An example is the requirement of the amount of hours spend learning the language, which is being changed to a requirement that every one must learn Norwegians to a satisfactory level. (Government.no, 2018).

While most of my informants poured their frustrations on themselves about not being able to master the language well enough, others pointed fingers at the curriculum of the programme, like informant 104 who expressed his thoughts about not learning academic language and instead learning language that was designed for the labour market. The bottom line here is that, the introduction programme is not designed to make its participants speak perfect Norwegian, as this is impossible in a two year frame, but it rather teaches its participants the basic communication skills needed in order for them to personally and gradually improve their skills by themselves and as research shows, language learning is an extremely individualistic process. The introduction programme mostly acts as a facilitator to this process rather than a determining structure. This is why immigrants must be proactive in their negotiations during their integration process, by firstly understanding that language is one of the most important keys that unlocks all the doors of integration and by secondly making efforts to speak it.

4.2.2. Socio-Cultural Impact

The literature on immigrant integration usually distinguishes various dimension of integration, the most important being structural, social, cultural, and psychological

integration. Structural integration is regarded as a key indication of immigrants' successful and active participation in the host society and driving force behind other integration outcomes (Alba & Nee, 2003). This dimension of integration is primarily concerned with immigrants' position in education and on the labour market, which are the cornerstones of the Norwegian introduction programme. However, socio-cultural integration, on the other hand, is more concerned with how immigrants adapt to the social and cultural lifestyle of the majority population.

In order to help answer my research question, it was imperative that I understood what my informants thought the notion of integration was in their own words. It is without no doubt that all of informants understood what the introduction programme was all about, its objectives and the reasons why they were enrolled it in. However explaining what integration meant to them from their own perspective would give me an insight in their thoughts and understanding of the integration phenomenon. The more I understand them, the better I can interpret not only what they are saying but also what they are talking about.

105: "Integration is when one becomes part of the society, but not like assimilation, because I have one thing in my mind every time which is very important to me, my religion, my culture and my relations with my friends. In Norway people do not really care about religion or friendship which is a very important part of our culture back home in Turkey..."

The above quote was how one of my informants expressed himself when I asked him to tell me what integration was in his own words. Informant 105 pointed out that integration is when one becomes part of the society, but not like assimilation, because he cherishes his own values and cultures and wants to keep it regardless of his integration journey. The fact that informant 105 mentioned religion and friendship tells us how important these aspects of his life is when it comes to negotiating his acceptance and integration in the country. As I pointed out in my theoretical chapter, Kobberstad (2019) explains that to fit in or integrate is a relational social process, which means that one cannot only focus on the minority, but one must also understand the role of the majority. Is informant 105 perhaps trying to tell us that the majority is not assuming their role in this relational social process of fitting in as he expects them to, due to his cultural background where friendship and religion are held to high esteem? Or is he simply trying to tell us that cultural integration for him will almost never be possible in Norway since Norwegians do not hold the same values of friendship and religion as they do in his home country. Again, according to Kobberstad (2019) cultural categorisation

can be stigmatising. The assertion that informant 105 makes about Norwegians not caring about religion or friendship could be seen as not only categorising the majority but also making assumptions from a biased point of view which may even be considered cultural racism. The process of integration is a give and take process, a two-faced process which involves both the minority and the majority working hand in hand and in order for this process to be successful, both parties have to not only have mutual respect, but most importantly mutual understanding for each other. To assume that the standards of friendship and religion are better in Turkey than it is in Norway does not really conform to this mutual understanding process per se.

104: "...I think many people understand integration but confuse it with assimilation. I think integration means being part of the system without assimilation because I do not want to lose my culture or identity. Norwegians for example don't say anything about assimilation but their behaviour show us that they want us to be assimilated rather than integrated. They don't tell us that because the law doesn't allow them to, but deep inside they want us to be assimilated..."

What intrigued me with the response of informant 104 as seen above was the fact that he asserted that the Norwegian society favours assimilation more than mere integration. According to this informant, integration is what we see in laws, but in reality assimilation is what Norwegians want. Just like informant 105, informant 104 emphasises on the importance of his identity and culture which also tells us that he is ready to negotiate for integration as long as it does not deprive him from wholly withholding and expressing his culture and values. Perhaps informant 104 has this belief or I would say conspiracy theory about Norway being assimilation inclined rather than integration, from his experiences and dealings with Norwegians both during the introduction programme and outside the society at large. It is not wrong to say that informant 104 feels threatened in this negotiation process of integration, and hence believes that there is a hidden agenda behind Norwegian integration policies which according to him, hiddenly advocates assimilation. The next question which followed after this assertion was if informant 104 felt as an important part of the Norwegian society and he responded as follows;

104: "... actually I do not know why, but I just feel that I am important. All refugees who come to different countries do so because of reasons out of their control and sometimes, people see refugees like lesser people...but I am never ashamed about my identity, for

example when I meet people from Norway, I always do three things... I tell them my name, where I come from, and my status... and also I tell them I am a Muslim because it is my choice... Maybe they don't like it, but they must respect it. Many refugees are ashamed of their identity when I talk to them... “

It is already quite obvious that informant 104 is bent on keeping his culture, values and identity regardless of being in Norway, which is something expected of every immigrants as the integration policy in Norway does not in any way advocate losing ones identity or culture. Attending the introduction programme is expected to make a participant aware of their surrounding and eventually become an integrated part of it . Nevertheless, there is a huge disparity between the theoretical awareness and the practical awareness that is created as a result of attending this programme. This is for example seen from the fact that many of my informants understand the way of life of the ethnic majority, they understand the values, the cultural and social norms of the ethnic majority, but yet fail to be a part of it. Informant 104 tells us how important is it for him to mention his name, his religion and where he comes from every time he introduces himself. It is common in Norway as a foreigner to be asked where one is from as a way of breaking the ice, but usually uncommon to ask or talk about one`s religious beliefs or anything of that sort. This has a lot to do with respect of privacy above other things, and if informant 104 for example feels the need to express his religious beliefs as a sign of being proud of his identity, it could somewhat be interpreted as overstepping of boundaries which I suppose in this case happens when one feels intimidated or threatened as I mentioned above. The reason informant 104 decides to over step these social boundaries is due to the conception he has about Norwegians wanting immigrants to assimilate rather than integrate, which creates a conscious defence mechanism, hence making him introduce himself in such manners.

A central goal in community development for example, is to work towards social justice by addressing inequalities and facilitating the inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups of people (Larsen, Sewpaul, & Hole, 2014, s. 57). If we do not feel that we belong or feel solidarity, we become alienated and loneliness and greed takes over us which are some of the pressing problems of our time. This is why the communitarian movement and Amitar Etzioni argue for the recreation of our communities where we feel at home and can get a degree of control over our lives (Hutchinson, 2009, s. 119). Almost all of my informants agreed that the introduction programme has helped raised their awareness about Norway through language learning and societal studies, however it has not directly enabled them to be part of the social

and cultural realms of the Norwegian society. They do not feel at home or feel that they belong socially and culturally, which creates perception in participants like informant 104 who has to pro-actively mention his values in social meetings in order to remain proud in his identity as a way of downplaying the lack of solidarity he believes he faces.

One thing which the introduction programme is directly responsible for is making sure that attendees are well prepared for their transition to education or the labour market. The introduction programme is however, not directly responsible for the practical socio-cultural integration of its participants, which means that even though these participants have been exposed to the theoretical realities of the Norwegian society, there is no guarantee that attending the programme will automatically make them a part of the society from a socio-cultural perspective.

When asked, if my informants had Norwegian friends, watched Norwegian tv, ate Norwegian food or participated in activities considered as “typical Norwegian”, in order to understand how life outside the four walls of the introduction programme class room was for them, I discovered that their degree of inclusion in the society was mostly affected by their personal engagements, will power and resilience rather than their mere participation in the introduction programme.

101: “..sometimes we meet and eat dinner in a restaurant, some times we meet in a special occasion, or special event that we want to be together, it can be a concert.

It feels good and I feel included. Sometimes I invite my friends to my home, and I think it is the most important part of integration...You just need to speak with the people who live here and learn about this culture...”

As I discussed in the earlier segments of this thesis that researchers often divide integration into cultural integration, residential integration, economic integration and social integration of immigrants (Valenta & Bunad, 2010). Asking my informants if they had Norwegian friends was a way of bringing to light or understanding their social integration vis a vis their attendance in the introduction programme. It is clear that the degree of success in social integration for these participants in the introduction programme is highly based on their personal social interaction skills. Informant 101 for example was one of the informants with the most Norwegian friends. One would think that this should be the case with all other participants since they are all exposed to the same process, study in the same class room by the same teachers. This is nevertheless, far from being the case, which again shows us that the

personality of each immigrant has a huge role to play in their social integration process. The fact that informant 101 thinks that having friends and being socially involved with the ethnic majority is the most important part of integration says a lot about how imperative it is for immigrants to feel included socio-culturally. The fact that some immigrants might vehemently want to withhold their identity, culture, religion during their integration process, does not directly mean that, they at the same time are not interested in accepting or indulging in the Norwegian culture. From my observations in this research, the reality is that many immigrants are willing to be integrated in such ways that conform to the integration policies and objectives of Norway, but tend to face barriers and setback due to cultural misunderstandings between them and the majority population which consequently creates the mindset that informant 109 below has.

109: "I have some Norwegian friends, but it is hard to be close to them because I feel like they don't trust me. We do not really talk about important stuff..."

For many of my informants, friendship is a sign of solidarity, closeness, showing love and affection for one another. Which means that if there is no love or solidarity or that closeness which they are used to having back at home for example, it becomes difficult for them to create such friendships here in Norway. This can be also be seen in other studies which suggest that social integration is a process that is influenced by place, time and individual life trajectories and therefore cannot be truthfully accounted for by looking at the numbers and ethnic composition of a migrant's social relations. It is the quality of relations-notable friendships that matters most. (Frykman & Mozetic, 2019). We therefore find useful Ray Pahl's (2000) conceptualisation of friendship as the pillar of social life that is an end in its own right. According to him, friendships are "basic garments that surrounds one's self (p.73) and constitute "the highest and best quality in our personal relationships" (p.43). He also claims that they are of crucial importance for individual's self-esteem and well-being (p.135) (ibid). Informant 109 feels that his Norwegians friends do not trust him – a statement which is very ambiguous in itself, but however underlies the importance of quality friendship, which according to him is non existent without trust. One cannot feel solidarity or trust if one is not fully included or is left outside which is the case for most of my informants. That feeling of not being trusted could both be subjectively and objectively true in the sense that informant 109 does not feel trusted due to his minority status, lack of cultural understanding, not having the same views or values to that of his friends and so on. It could also be objectively true for the simple fact that quality friendship takes time to built and one cannot expect trust or

complete solidarity between friends in the early stages of friendship, something which applies even in ethnic Norwegian friendships. The same could apply to the “important stuff” my informant mentioned. His friendships are still shallow for many reasons, as immigrants usually encounter challenges related to foreign language, socio-cultural norms and personal contact (Frykman & Mozetic, 2019), which could be because of cultural misunderstanding, language barriers which does not allow my informant to fully express himself to the best of his ability, and also subconsciously makes his Norwegian friends hold back themselves because they think that my informant will not entirely understand them.

Most of my informants like informant 109 have attended the introduction programme for roughly one year and have lived in Norway for around two years, which means that they are still at the early stages of their integration process. Socio cultural integration is a process like every other aspect of integration and it can sometimes take even longer for some, since it mostly relies on their social interaction skills, ability to understand the cultural differences while accepting it and being part of it and finding the balance which does not allow them to lose themselves, their identity, culture or values in the same process.

110: “I do not have any Norwegian friends... There are two reasons for this, firstly the language makes it difficult to include myself and secondly Norwegians have a different perspective to friendship than what I have”

As I mentioned in the last paragraph, language is one of things that creates barriers in creating the type of friendships with Norwegians that my informants are used to back home. Informant 110 understands that he does not have Norwegian friends because he cannot fully express himself in the ways which he will otherwise do with his mother tongue. How can your friends think that you are funny if you are not able to crack jokes in Norwegian? how can they see how intelligent and thoughtful you are if you are not able to be insightful in Norwegian? These are some of the types of problems which participants like informant 110 faces in their socio cultural integration process. Due to language barriers, they are not able to fully be themselves or express themselves to their full abilities. Djuve and Klis (2015) knowledge summary confirms that the language learning in the introduction programme entails a lot of classroom teaching and that there is usually limited use of other language learning tools. This is perhaps one of the reasons why being part of the society out of the classroom for many immigrants is difficult, because they do not understand how to engage, and have no approach to the practical aspect of social integration. The fact that informant 110

does not have any Norwegian friends as a result of this language setback only creates a snowball effect of other misconceptions like for example when he asserts that “Norwegians have a different perspective to friendship than what he has”. Informant 110 wouldn’t exactly know or understand what perspective of friendship Norwegians have if he does have any Norwegian friends. Does this also mean that he has made up his mind to not have any Norwegian friends even after 10 years of living in Norway?, because one sure thing is that, the Norwegian friendship perspective will not change over time, unless he decides to change his own mindset.

One cannot judge the inside of a building by looking at it from the outside and more so, even houses that look the same on the outside do not necessarily look the same on the inside. This simply means that speaking of friendship perspectives in such an ambiguous way like informant 110 does, only creates more setbacks for him. The mindset which one has in the process of integration is very important, which is why I have reiterated the importance of respecting, accepting and sometimes even compromising in order meet half way in the integration process between the minority and the majority population. This is why I use the term “ negotiation” in my research question, because it is a give and take process, and most a times many immigrants create their own demise in their integration process, due to misconceptions and assuming the worst about the ethnic majority and vice versa.

4.2.3. Economic Impact

One of my other preoccupations during this research in regards to the life changing experiences that my informants had been exposed to during their attendance in the introduction programme, was understanding the economic impact that this programme has on their lives in Norway and on their integration process. There is usually two schools of thoughts among locals in Norway concerning their views on the acceptance of immigrants in the country. Usually, some ethnic Norwegian believe that immigrants only come to Norway to milk out the generosity of the Norwegian welfare state, while others belief that the coming of immigrants to the country helps boost the economy as immigration helps grease the wheels of the labour market through man-power. The inflow of aliens into the country in the last decades has made immigration and immigration policies a major public issue in Norway. Many Norwegian people are concerned that immigration reduces employment opportunities for the existing work force, depresses wage rates in already low-wage labour markets, and

financially strains taxpayers via their receipt of transfer payments and use of social service programmes (Feridun, 2005).

As a group, refugees usually have lower employment rates than immigrants who come to Norway for work or education. The labour market challenges faced by refugees are often attributed to trauma related to their motive for migration. The context of reception can also delay their economic integration, as lengthy asylum and settlement procedures hinder early efforts to find employment. Although refugees make slower start than other immigrants, several studies indicate that this “refugee gap” is much smaller for refugees who have been resident for many years (Bakker, Dagevos, & Engbersen, 2017)

Many of my informants experienced their first economic independence during their attendance in the introduction programme. This economic independence comes through what is known as the introduction grant. The introduction grant is a monthly payment of around kr.15,439,33 monthly or kr.10,286,22 for participants below the age of 25 years (IMDi), with the aim of covering the basic necessities of its participants so that they can in turn have full focus on learning the language and preparing themselves for either education or the labour market. Prior to receiving this introduction grants, most of my informants had never paid a bill by themselves before since they lived in camps where everything was taken care of and only got very little allowances to juggle with. During my interviews, I asked my informants what they had to say about this introduction grant, if it was enough for them and how it motivated them to continuously attend the introduction programme and the economic impact it has had on their lives so far as future participants of the Norwegian labour market.

Informant 101 responded by saying that;

101:” Yea I think it is enough. It is not too much, but it is enough and it is like a motivation since the introduction programme is like a job and the job is to work for yourself and to be integrated and it will be difficult without that money. So I think it is a good motivation. I have never seen anybody in the introduction programme that has financial problems, so...I think it will be difficult without the money, because when we live Norway we have bills to pay...”

Economic independence for my informants during their attendance in the introduction programme creates a sense of belonging and inclusion in activities like being able to pay bills by themselves, and cater for their needs without any intrusion. The importance that this introduction grant has on the integration process of its participants is one which both has seen and unseen effects. Seen effects in the sense that many of my informants assert that without

this money, it will be difficult for them to work and at the same attend the programme since most of their time and resources will be allocated to earning money for their wellbeing. On the other hand, some of the unseen effects of this grant on the integration process of my informants is related to socio-cultural integration discussed in the last sub chapter. One cannot be socially integrated from the comfort of their home couches. In order for social integration to happen, these immigrants have to be active in social arenas, and this cannot happen without the necessary finances. For some, meeting and interacting with Norwegian friends happens during parties and gatherings which cost money to attend. Many other informants understand the importance of this grant like informant 101 does, and we can see that in what informant 102 says;

102: “We don’t have any extra income so this money is very important for us. I will still have the same motivation for the introduction programme, even if we didn’t get the money. The most important things for me is learning Norwegian. If the government don’t help us with this money it would be hard to come to school and work at the same time. I can only thank Norway for this. Opening their doors for us and protecting us...”

Many of my informants explained that prior to attending this programme, they had no idea about financial responsibilities in Norway like paying bills or being able to manage their personal economies since they lived in camps where everything was taken care of for them. Today, they are more aware of the financial system in which they are a part of, they understand the value of money and most importantly they are financially independent, something which has positive psychological effects like boosting their morals and making them feel like an important part of the society. After the introduction programme, all of my informants are expected to join the labour market or start an education in order to not only continue their integration process, but to also label their time in the introduction programme as successful. The economic impact that having a job has on the process of integration is perhaps one of the most researched aspects of integration which is why joining the labour market stands at the forefront of the introduction programme objectives. Participants who already understand the importance of financial stability and economic independence from receiving their introduction grant are willing to continue in such light after the programme is over by working or studying to eventually work after studies.

108: “I think the money is enough to survive, but not for anything else. I cannot take a driver license or do anything with the money... The money is a motivation because it helps develop myself, to be independent and learn how to use money in Norway...”

The introduction grant is not meant to enrich its participants, neither is it meant to finance their extra curricular activities like travelling and such. Informant 108 for example gives the impression that the introduction grant is suppose to cover all their financial desires, which is obviously not the purpose for this grant. Just like the other informants above, informant 108 agrees that the introduction grant is a form of motivation because it helps him develop himself and learn how to use money in Norway. The purpose for financial integration for immigrants in Norway is to delimit the economic dependence of immigrants on the welfare state. Also studies have shown that financial integration also creates a sense of inclusion because immigrants feel like an important part of the society when they can contribute to the growth of the welfare system rather than be a burden to it as I earlier discussed in the welfare state sub-chapter. More of my informants expressed themselves in the same light;

106: "I don't know what we can do without this money, so I think it is very important that we have it, because it will be difficult to learn Norwegian and work at the same time..."

One thing which I noticed from this particular topic was that all of my informants were very much aware of the fact that this money was not given to them as hand outs, but instead as a motivation that needed repayment through the fulfilment of civic duties, like their active involvement in the programme by always being present and treating the programme like a job with a salary and eventually passing the language test. In activation programmes like this, behavioural control typically comes in shape of economic sanctions. Research generally indicates that a reduction in benefit payments, or the expectation of such reductions, will push benefit recipients towards desired behaviours (McVicar, Wooden, & Leung, 2016) While some of my informants agreed that this grant was some sort of motivation for them, one particular informant made me understand that it was not a game changer for him.

107: "For me myself I don't think it is enough especially in Norway. The money does not really motivate me, because If I didn't have the money I will be working. For example when I was in the camp, I still came to school every day without getting that money. The money is helping me to get my things done, but it is not a game changer."

Looking at the introduction grant as a game changer is obviously not the mindset I had when embarking on this particular topic, however the fact that informant 107 brought this to my attention, created some sort of curiosity within me as to why he made that statement. I therefore asked him to elaborate on his assertion. Informant 107 explained that he had been feeling mistreated and objectified because he was constantly been reminded by the

immigration office that he is being paid to attend the introduction programme and failure to attend will lead to economic sanctions like a reduction in the monthly grant and so on. It is clearly stated in the law that failing to attend the programme without any valid reasons will lead to a reduction cut, which is the main idea behind an activation policy such as this one. Such economic sanctions also prepares these introduction programme participants for the real world from my point of view, a world in which people are held accountable for their mistakes, a world in which one has to work before one eats, a world in which there is simply no food for lazy people. The frustration which informant 107 expressed in this regard rings an alarm on misunderstanding between him and the integration office workers in regards to what integration is all about and which part of integration are most important or less important. A further elaboration of this particular point will be discussed below, in the sub-chapter relating to the challenges my informants face. All in all, the economic impact that attending the introduction programme has on its participants through the financial independence created from receiving these introduction grants, goes a long way to prepare them for their futures in the labour market which eventually creates a better atmosphere for negotiating their integration in the society at large.

4.3 THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Before conducting the interviews with all my ten informants, I already had general ideas about some of the challenges that one could face as an immigrant in a country like Norway. These challenges were not farfetched for me, as I have experienced some of it myself as an immigrant in the country, something which is inevitable for all immigrants of all sorts. However, in the case of this study, I was more curious about the challenges that my informants faced and experienced not only in Norway in general, but mostly in the process of attending the introduction programme. Again, one cannot fully understand the interior of a house by just looking at it from the outside. The introduction programme looks beautiful and almost flawless from the outside, for outsiders. But, what exactly do the people who are actively participating in it, think of it and what are some of the unseen challenges they face which they sometimes cannot talk about? This is exactly what I sought to find out by understanding the challenges that my participants encountered not only in their integration process in general, but also during their séjour in the introduction programme in particular. Understanding these challenges from a micro perspective helps to answer my research question, since it involves first hand information regarding the struggles and impediments faced during the negotiation process of integration for my informants.

4.3.1 Long Transition and Slow Adaptation.

The challenges of integration are usually complicated by the widespread resistance of natives to immigrants and their children. There are anxieties about whether the newcomers will fit in and fears that they will undermine the basic foundations of established ways of life. These concerns are prominent in popular writings and also in medias. They are evident in opinion polls. They feature in some academic writings, and they have been voiced and exploited by politicians. A widely acclaimed 2009 book by journalist Christopher Caldwell, *Reflection on the Revolution in Europe*, argues that immigration there is exacting a “steep price in freedom” and bringing “disorder, penury, and crime” (Alba & Foner, 2015). All of my ten informants during this study, were not strangers to such stigmatisation and prejudices which immigrants generally face both directly and indirectly. In order to get a general perspective on some of these challenges, I asked my informant if they thought being an immigrant in a foreign country was difficult and why;

102: “Yea it is the first time In my life that I experience something like this. I lived in different countries during my studies. I lived in Romania, Kazakhstan for three years, Malaysia and other countries, but it was never the same as now, because now I know I cannot go back home and see my family again. My family is always crying and we cannot meet anywhere because we are afraid and it is very difficult because I feel completely alone...”

Informant 102 is no stranger to living in foreign countries, however, she expresses her frustration for her present predicaments, because she feels like she has no absolute control over her life, she cannot travel home due to political reasons and life is difficult because she feels alone. The freedom which many work immigrants coming from other European countries possess, which enables them to travel back home at will, is something that almost all of my informants would only dream of. As a refugee, one is disconnected from their past in many ways and sometimes this disconnection can be traumatic for many. Many immigrants like informant 102 feel alienated and alone, which has a long term effect on their integration. It is almost like getting stocked in some sort of transit, without being able to go back or move forward. Informant 102 does not feel at home in Norway, at least not yet, and at the same time cannot visit her family back home. Focusing on integrating one self in a new society becomes difficult when one constantly misses their old life, which slows down the transition phase and eventually hinders adaptation to the new environment. In order to socially, cultural or financially integrate, it is important to be fully involved in these aspects, by for example being

part of social gatherings, making friends, having a job, and so on. These things will be hard to achieve if one lives in a bubble of uncertainty or simply never feels at peace. The psychological effects of such a mindset only creates immigrants who do not make an effort to integrate because they are constantly thinking about home and feeling alone. As the saying goes, home is where the heart is and if their minds are not focused in Norway during their integration process, they will hardly ever feel and home here.

104: "Refugee life is very different and many people tend to have psychological and even mental problems from this."

Most a times, we judge immigrants in general from a position of privilege, we think and assume that we understand their predicaments and the things they battle with, but in reality we do not. Many of my informants see Norway today as a safe haven compared to the struggles and hardship they have been through in their former lives, and sometimes unless one really talks to them to understands their situation, one will always judge them from a position of privilege. Informant 104 explains this by telling us how hard it is for many refugees, who end up having psychological and mental problems. Many of my informants had been incarcerated for long periods in their home countries, travelled by land and sea and journeyed for several months just to come to Norway. The psychological and mental effect that this transition causes for many, haunts them for a very long time and as long as it keeps haunting them, their attention will be divided, hence hindering their integration process especially since they cannot completely focus on their new lives in Norway.

105: "Yes it Is very hard, because I feel like I have no choice over my life now, I can`t go back home or do anything about my situation right now..."

The process of migration for many of these immigrants has a definite influence on health, social, economic, cultural, religious and political aspects of human life. Among the many studies carried out on the impacts of migration, the impact of the mental and psychological health of the immigrant is one important area which many researchers have focused on (Virupaksha, Ashok, & Bergai, 2014). The feeling of having no choice over oneself or life like informant 105 explains is a pattern I noticed on most of my informants. This feeling is definitely not far-fetched for other immigrants in Norway or anywhere else for that matter, due to the lack of having control over what happens in the nearest future, the fear of not being accepted, fear of not adapting to ones new environment and the fear of simply failing. If at all these fears are not dealt with accordingly, what usually happens is that these immigrants

remain in this constant loop of fear that does not allow them to excel to their full potential and this results to a failed economic and socio-cultural integration process. The whole point of integration in Norway is to make sure that immigrants from all ages, backgrounds and status are able to equally contribute to the growth of the Norwegian society and at the same equally enjoy the benefits of this growth in alignment with the majority population. However, if immigrants do not psychologically feel at peace or feel that they belong, they tend to lack that sense of inclusion and acceptance which when present, creates a solidarity state of mind.

107: "I don't really feel at home, how could I feel at home here? It is very difficult to feel at home when this is not my home... Right now I do not feel at home, but if in the future, I do the things I want and I give things back to the society and when they treat me the way that I deserve, I think it will help me to feel a little bit more at home... but not 100%"

Just like I explained above, informant 107 lacks that mindset of inclusion and feeling that he belongs to, and is an important part of the Norwegian society. However, one thing that is very important to take note of in what informant 107 says is that, he might feel a little bit more at home here in Norway if he is given the chance to give back to the society, by of course working, paying tax and exercising his civil duties in full effect and most importantly being treated the way he deserves. This is the type of negotiation which I noticed in most of the narratives of my informants which again conforms to the two-faced process of integration whereby both the majority and the minority play an equal role. Informant 107 is willing and ready to fully integrate, give back to the society above all, if only he is given the chance and treated as he deserves. This consequently means that, in a scenario where informant 107 is not treated as he deserves or given the chance to prove himself, he will likely never feel at home, which will only continue to be an impediment to his integration process.

Furthermore, another transitional impediment which slows down adaptation and hence the integration process is the fact that many immigrants have to sometimes restart their lives at fresh. It almost like factory resetting an electronic device, where everything is deleted. Most of my informants had jobs, families and many other life long commitments before coming to Norway. For many of them, their past has become a blurry memory, especially the ones who came here without proper documentation. Having to start life afresh, like going back to school or simply doing jobs that don't relate to the ones they had back home, is a very hard pill to swallow for many of these immigrants.

103: “...for me to start everything afresh is hard. I am almost 29 years old and starting a new life at this age is difficult, especially when the things I had before are not accepted here like my education, which makes me feel like I don't belong here sometimes.

There is a reason why integration is called a process, rather than just a static occurrence, and this is because it takes time to be integrated in a society, it takes time to regain ones status from the past life, which is why the Norwegian government is finding new solutions everyday to ameliorate the integration policies for its immigrants in order to minimise the negative effects of these long transitions. The introduction programme stands at the forefront of these integration policies and for many of my informants, even though life is not exactly as they expected or anticipated on their arrival to Norway, one cannot deny the fact that with time things only get better for these immigrants as long as they stay focused and do not give up

4.3.2. Challenges with the Immigration Office

It came to my attention from my first interview that one of the biggest challenges my informants faced was with the immigration office and their counsellors through misunderstanding, miscommunication and sometimes misplaced interests. As a form of reminder, this thesis theoretically takes a micro-perspective approach, meaning my main focus has been shed light on my research question from the perspective of my informants through in-depth interviews. However, during the interviews, some part of me felt a pressing need to conduct some interviews with the immigration office workers in order to get both sides of the story, but doing so would have changed the perspective in which I had decided to build this study upon and at the same disrupt the focus and delimitation of the research.

It came to my attention in several of my interviews that most of my informants had a very rugged relationship with their contact persons at the immigration office and this sometimes created problems of lack of trust, reluctance to express oneself deeply and pessimism towards the system. In the theoretical chapter of this thesis, I discussed in the structure-agent sub chapter the importance of good collaboration with the different parties involved in the integration process both from the macro and micro levels. This assertion is backed up by a number of researches concluding that in order to consolidate the content and execution of the introduction programme, there should be a better collaboration between the different actors who are involved and most especially between the immigration office and the Norwegian language schools, right down to the introduction programme participants themselves (Bjerck & Eide, 2019) This in effect means that lack of such effective collaborations only creates

setbacks and barriers for both immigrants on a micro level and the immigration policies as a whole on a macro level.

105: "I feel very demotivated sometimes especially when I get bad news from my consultant who tells me I have to quit the introduction programme in the summer. Sometimes I feel sad because of these things..."

In the previous sub-chapter, I discussed how the psychological effects of long transition can slow adaptation and hinder a smooth integration process and also stated some of the reasons why many of immigrants could find themselves in this type of situations. Informant 105 explains that he feels sad sometimes because of the bad news he gets from his consultants which makes him very demotivated to not only come to school, but also fight for his integration in general. The challenges that many immigrants face in general are overwhelming and these challenges sometimes begin at the genesis of their journeys to Norway. For a participant like informant 105, the introduction programme according to him, is meant to give him hope, and relief him of some of the fears he has like not fitting in or being including, getting a job and so on.

107: "... it because of the way they treat me for the last 6 months. Sometimes I don't feel like coming..."

Informant 107 was the same informant who earlier complained about being materialised or being treated unfairly by the immigration office workers every time money was involved. According to him, the impression he got from their attitude towards him was some sort of condescending impression because they would always remind him of the money he is being paid to attend the programme and at the same time, try to emotionally blackmail him with these economic slurs. Now mind you, this is informant 107's version of the story, which also corroborates with many of my other informants version of the story, which was exactly one of reasons why this particular issue interested me. In order to investigate this issue myself and especially get an insight into the day to day activities of an immigration office consultant in regards to the job they do with their immigrant consultees, I did some document research.

Looking at one of the job vacancies that was put out by the immigration office online in search for a consultant, it was stated that as a refugee consultant, one must have good collaboration and communication skills and the ability to find good solutions. One has to be tolerant and open to others having a different understanding and ways of dealing with everyday life. This may include topics such as religion, child care or food traditions and this

often requires good knowledge of one`s own values and norms (jobbnorge.no.). When it comes to the street-level implementation of migration policy, a topic on which there is limited research, scholars stress that the decision-making of migration officers does not rest on the in-depth study of legislative texts (Infantino, 2019). One thing I also noticed on the job vacancy announcement made by the immigration office online was that, one did not really need a specific formal education to apply for the job and most applicants or workers usually have a bachelor in different social science domains. To cope with the complexity of the law and lacking the means to improve their legal knowledge, migration officers, usually turn to their colleagues for advice. In doing so, they develop a shared understanding about the law (Eule, 2014). Such knowledge acquired “On the ground” of public policies prevails over established knowledge, such as laws, circular and directives (Ibid)

The fact that a majority of my informants complained about the effectiveness of the immigration office workers who are at this particular stage of the lives, the most important people in their process of integration, considering the fact that they act as middle men between the society and my informants. They are representatives of the structures, interpreters and implementors of the immigration policies put in place by the government, which simply means that their roles in the integration process of my informants are very crucial. When asked what my informants liked or did not like about the introduction programme, many of them referred to the misunderstandings they have with their contact persons as one of the challenges they faced.

104: “My new adviser does not really care and she just tells me I must be a cleaner and simply have a job as soon as possible. I have complained many times about the way they treat me, but nothing has happened. I have never gotten anything free in my life... but things changed when I came to Norway and I cried the first time I got money from the government... I am really trying to give back, but if someone tries to help us, it will really be easier for me to give back”

Informant 104 throughout our entire discussion during our interview, was very bent on the fact that he wanted to give back to the Norwegian society, not only as a form of appreciation, but also because he felt it was his civic duty to do so just like any other ethnic Norwegian. If an immigrant like informant 104 who had a high status job back home, is constantly being told that his dreams are almost impossible in Norway and constantly being advised to settle for lesser jobs, just because it is the easier option for him and obviously for the consultant too,

it only creates lack of trust in the system for this informant. As earlier stated in my theoretical chapter, the agent cannot take or seize opportunities without the structure creating these opportunities and vice versa which is why there needs to be a relationship or correlation between both. If an immigrant is left no choice or not given enough opportunities, what happens is they either rebel and try to create their own opportunities or simply settle for the only opportunities they have been given. It is important for Norway's long-term development, in order to maintain a robust and economically sustainable welfare system, that everyone whether immigrant finds work and undertakes studies, and become tax payers and contributing citizens (Thorud, 2017). According to informant 104, he is made to feel as though he doesn't have the right to the same opportunities as ethnic Norwegians since his consultant tells him to be a cleaner and have any job as fast as possible, because it is the easier path to take.

105. "My consultant said she wants me to quit the introduction programme by summer and take the exam and she did not even ask me about it and when I told her I will not be ready by then, she said I have no choice... If I quit in the summer it means that I have not even been in the programme for 1 year... They told me the main objective of me being in the introduction programme is to get a job as quick as possible."

Integration calls for a joint effort by many parties. The individual immigrant shall be met with the expectation and requirement that s/he is to contribute and participate, and considerable effort is expected of the individual. At the same time, society must take steps to ensure that everyone can make use of their capacities in the labour market and community life (Thorud, 2017). Just like informant 104, informant 105 also feels a lack of trust in the system from his experiences with his consultant at the immigration office and once again being told to get a job as quick as possible without regarding his own dreams, desires and aspirations, or worse still following the individually adapted plan as the introduction programme law stipulates.

Even though it seems like the misunderstanding between the immigration office and my informants outweighs the good help they get, it should be important to keep in mind that these issues are heavily based on the individual employee or consultant and sometimes also the relationship between the consultant and the immigrant and most importantly from one municipality to the other. One of my informants even told me that most of his friends in other municipalities did not face these same problems which gave him an impression that it wasn't a general problem but rather an individualistic problem pertaining to individual immigration

office workers. These consultants are middle men between the immigrants and the opportunities they have during the introduction programme. If their mindsets and objectives are not aligned, it only creates some of the misunderstandings which I just mentioned, hence leading to a failed implantation of policies. This in a long run creates barriers for the integration process of these immigrants, especially when they feel left out, unheard or simply treated like their dreams are not valid as seen in the narrative of my informants above.

4.3.3 Work Practice Challenges

According to the IMDi, work practice during the introduction programme should build on the competence of the participants, and provide the relevant work experience in relation to the individual's individual plan. Schemes of working practices require cooperation between the municipality and the local business community, and between the various municipal agencies. Voluntary organisations and local associations can also offer work practices for participants in introduction programmes in many places. It is in the statutes of the programme that all participants have the right to an individual plan in order to find a way from where they are to the place they wish to be (IMDi, 2011), however, these written objectives for the participants of the introduction programme do not completely conform to the narratives and feedbacks I got from my informants on this subject. Many of my informants made me understand their frustration with this aspect of the introduction programme by explaining that the individual plan was not as individual as they anticipated and more so everyone was simply put in the same basket. A majority of my informants clearly stated how ineffective their work practise was and how many of them were placed in working environments that had nothing to do with their background skills or interests which usually created some of the misunderstandings and rugged relationships between them and the immigration office as I explained in the previous sub chapter. When asked about what my informants did not like about the introduction programme, informant 101 raised the issue of the practical training to my attention and also the lack of individuality in the programme. In his words, he explained that;

101: "...What I don't like is that the introduction programme can be more individual, because every person who comes to Norway has a different background or job experience. For example the school has only 5 different categories of work practice, like restaurant, nursing homes, grocery stores etc and if you are a medical doctor like me, it is difficult to fit in these categories. "

Informant 101 as I earlier mentioned was a doctor in his home country and moving to Norway was not a decision made out of free will, but rather one which depended on life and death. According to this informant, being able to be a medical doctor in Norway will not only be a fulfilment of purpose, but also a continuation of the dream he once lived in his home country. Immigrants with high levels of education are characterised as hard working, ambitious and having good progress, but at the same time they also have very high expectation, something which can sometimes create problems rather than advantages (Djuve et al.2017:12).

Informant 101 raised a very important point by expressing the lack of individuality in the introduction programme. The whole idea of an individual plan for the participants of the introduction program, is to firstly customise the needs of every participant in regards to their desires and aspirations for their future in Norway. Mapping, information and supervision, makes the basis for a good individual plan (IMDI). If the needs of every participant is not customised or mapped in accordance to their aspirations or needs as requested by law, the participants involved tend to be demotivated which eventually slows down their integration process.

When I interviewed informant 102, I found out that just like informant 101, he had the same mindset and faced the same challenges regarding the issue of work practice. He explained that;

102: “... What I don’t like with the Practical training is that I did not want the place I was put in, but I don’t have any choice because they do not offer other options.”

Both informant 101 and 102 are typical examples of demotivated participants who view the qualification offer as forceful and sometimes even meaningless since it doesn’t in any way help them regain the status of doctors they had back home or for the least put them on that same track (Lillevik & Tyldum, 2018). The work practice is one of the practical integration measure in the Norwegian integration policy and through this practice, participants are not only expected to learn and understand how things work in the labour market, but also create network that might help them get jobs after the completion of the introduction programme. I have personally worked with people who use to once be introduction programme participants and ended up having work in the same place they had their work practice. However, what interested me most in this work practice issue was how my informants felt during the practice period, how much being there helped them understand the society from a labour market perspective and if in reality it helped ease the process of their integration through the creation of contacts, making new friends and increasing their language proficiency. Many of my

informants explained that the work practice did not help them as much as they wished it would, more so for the fact that they were placed in practice places they did not like or see the importance in regards to their background qualifications.

105: "...I had practical training at the nursing home. I went there every Thursday, but the problem is that it was not relevant with my studies or work... My contact person told me it does not matter because I just need a job... When I am at the nursing home, I do not really learn much because I think the employees there do not really care to help me or talk to me so I can learn Norwegian..."

The work practise for many of my informants is supposed to be their first experience in the world of the Norwegian labour market. It is during this work practise that many of these immigrants are expected to understand how things practically work outside the four walls of the introduction programme class rooms and most importantly practically prepare them for their futures in the labour market. This is perhaps one of the areas in which the society has to assume its full responsibility in the integration process of these participants by for example helping them acquire all the practical knowledge they need during their practise periods, talk to them and simply make them feel noticed and included. Many of my informants like informant 105 felt unnoticed, and unheard during their practise periods already coupled with the fact that they were doing practical training in places which they were not satisfied or happy with. I wouldn't exactly blame the employees at these different work places, because they have either been misinformed or not informed at all about their responsibilities in the integration process of the immigrants who work with them. From all indications, there is a structural failure and a lack of effective collaboration between the immigration office and these practise places, something which Huxham and Vangen (2015) terms "collaborative inertia" in collaboration where slow progress is made or die without achieving anything. The people negatively affected by this lack of effective collaboration or collaborative inertia are the participants of the introduction programme and their integration process.

Furthermore, I observed that the participants who rebelled against their consultant's decisions or advices, felt more comfortable in what they ended up doing. It suddenly became a sort of survival of the fittest type of situation in which only the ones who were resilient and resistant emerged satisfied. This is seen through the narrative of informant 104;

104: "... I had my practical for 4 months. I had it every Tuesday and Friday. I did the arrangement myself and didn't do my practical where the school sends us, because I know

that it doesn't really help us for example when they send us to the shops to fill goods... I really resisted and told them I don't want to go where they are sending me, because I really wanted a place where I can learn Norwegian. So, I asked the theatre to do practical time there and I feel that I learned a lot there."

Even though most of my informants complained about their experiences during their work practice, the informants who chose their practice places themselves like informant 104 showed more enthusiasm and positivity than his counterparts who had to settle for the options they were given. If participants like informant 104 could create his own opportunities and find a practise place by himself, it only means that lack of effectiveness in the individual plan has nothing to do with lack of resources, since informant 104 proved he could find a place for himself without the help of the immigration office. I also noticed this when informant 109 explained how much he learned in a practice place which he found himself and I observed the same level of satisfaction in him like that of informant 104 which was the complete opposite to the other eight informants who reluctantly followed their individual plan which according to them was not so individual.

109: "Yea I had practical training in a clothing store. It was a very good experience because of the boss there. We spoke a lot and he thought me many things about sales and I learned a lot of Norwegian too..."

The simple fact that two out of my ten informants got their satisfaction in their work practice as a result of rebelling, tells us that there are a number of loopholes that need to be addressed especially considering the fact that, the work practice stands as a direct contact point between the informant and the labour market, which is one of the main objectives of the introduction programme, since it remains a very important platform and arena for integration.

4.4 THE OPPORTUNITIES CREATED

Regardless from which perspective we chose to see things, the main objective of integration measures like the introduction programme in general is to yield fruitful outcomes that eventually leads to integration. The government of Norway and its society in general does not invest both its time and resources on immigrants just so that they can end up milking the generosity of the welfare state without contributing to its growth. Time and resources are being put in place, new measure created, new solutions researched on perennially with the main goal and objective being to successfully integrate minority groups into the majority population for the betterment and greater good of the society at large . In this thesis, I

decomposed my research question in to three different questions in order to enable me shed light on my research question from different perspective and in doing so, I sought to understand how attending the introduction programme has impacted my informants or its participants in general, the challenges they have faced during the course of attending this programme and now finally and most importantly the opportunities that are created as a result of attending this programme. The golden question here is what exactly happens after the completion of the introduction programme and how is the programme directly or indirectly responsible for what happens next. According to Statistic Norway, around 60 percent of the people who complete the introduction programme one year later, are either working or studying or doing both since 2015, however, the political target remains at 70 percent something which is yet to be achieved. In this segment of the chapter, I will present and interpret some of the empirical finding in regards to the opportunities created for my informants as a result of attending the introduction programme.

4.4.1 Understanding what is at stake.

Throughout the course of this research, especially during the encounters I had with my informants, I was always preoccupied with finding out if my informants understood the reasons why they were participating in the introduction programme. I wanted to know if they consciously understand the importance of being in this programme, not only for themselves but also for the effects and impacts their participation and integration success will have on the society at large. What was even more important was understanding what they have been told by their teachers, consultants, the municipality and the immigration office in general. I believe receiving the right information is a key component in the integration process of many immigrants and understanding this information is also very imperative because one can only practically apply information that has been understood. Out of such curiosity I asked my informants if they remember the first thing they were told when they started the introduction programme and what to expect as a result of attending the programme.

101: “ I remember they told me that after this I will have enough knowledge, language and cultural background to be able to work in Norway. I was very hopeful...”

I remember when talking to my informants on this particular subject, many of them had a bright face which came as a result of reminiscing the good old days when they were finally given the opportunity to become a part of the Norwegian society. The hope which many of my informants spoke about was given to them from the very first encounters they had in the

introduction programme and this created some sort of moral boost because they understood that as long as they follow and understand the information and instructions that have been given to them, their dreams in Norway will surely see the light. Even though hope was something which many of my informants got out of their first encounter in the introduction programme, many of them during our conversation on this particular topic expressed a decline in that hope and this comes as a result of some of the challenges they have encountered as I earlier discussed in the previous segment. However, what is most important is that even though some of them might have lost hope in their present predicaments, they did not entirely lose hope in the system. The reasons why not losing hope in the entire system is very important is because, the introduction programme is only a stepping stone to the real world and after they are done, they have to individually face this real world and the introduction programme for many of them will simply be a story of the past.

105: "Actually, I met with my teacher and she gave me a lot of hope which made me love Norway and the society and also the people... I still believe in this and I have almost the same motivation as the same day because even though things are hard, I know it is not about the Norwegian system in general, but mostly because of this city in particular. I have not lost all hope in the system..."

Understanding that even though things might be hard at the moment, but their integration of greatly lies on their ability to fight for it and keep their resilience shows that most of my informants have understood that the introduction programme is not an end, but rather a means to an end. The fact that informant 105 states that he has not lost all hope in the system shows that the impediments encountered so far during the introduction programme has not negatively affected him to the point of wanting to give up. Almost all of my informants commented on the great work done by the teachers in school, the people directly responsible for teaching the language, and almost everything they know about Norway. The effects of this good teaching, understanding and effective relationship between my informants and their teachers, has proven to be of great advantage to them, by making them see and understand that all hope is not lost in the system. In order for integration to happen as planned and written in the Norwegian integration policies, these immigrants have to trust the system which they are constantly negotiating to be a part of, because only then will they see and understand the importance of integration for themselves on a micro level and for the society on a macro level.

4.4.2 From Introduction Programme to Education and/or Labour

Through their individual plans, the introduction programme participants are working towards a specific goal which is either to start an education or get into the labour market all depending first and foremostly on their personal desire primarily and with some secondary advice from their consultant as to what works best for their situation. Both politicians and researchers have posited that participation in the labour market is one of the best roads to integration. Working activities is believed to strengthen social interaction, language proficiency and fights against parallel societies. Work is therefore important for personal fulfilment and also because ones everyday life can be equal to that of the majority population (Sandnes, 2017).

I asked my informants during the interviews how exactly attending the programme will help them start an education or become members of the working force and also what they thought the advantages of attending this programme was. Again, the whole point was to see if my informant had the right information, understood their situation and also were aware of their responsibilities in this two-faced process of integration. After completing the introduction programme for two years or less, most of my informants will not have the same help from neither the municipality or immigration office as they do during the programme, which means that they will have to assume their responsibilities fully and fight for themselves and their opportunities as other abled members of the society.

101: "It has two different sides, firstly it is the Norwegian language... you have to speak Norwegian if you want to work in Norway and secondly... you can meet people through the work practice and have these connections that can help you after the programme. Without a work practice place, it is very difficult to get the network for the job and there is very high probability that you will get a job from your work practice place"

I am currently working in a job where two of my colleagues are previous introduction programme participants. These colleagues of mine were part of the reason why I decided to carry out this research. One of them is currently completing his bachelors in nursing while working at the same time in the same job he has been working for almost three years, which is also the same job he had as his work practice during his introduction programme days. It is without no doubts that my colleague is a success story when it comes to the opportunities that the introduction programme creates for its participants especially those who are willing and ready to assume their own responsibilities. Informant 101 is definitely not wrong when he says that there is a very high probability that one gets a job in the same place that they had

their work practice during the programme. This is definitely one of the advantages of attending the introduction programme, however, this is an advantage that is not equal for all, but rather an advantage that needs proactive participants to grasp and by proactive I mean participants who are willing to make good use of the network they are exposed to during the introduction programme. Informant 102 also understands the importance of being proactive and taking initiative himself in order to not only grasp the already existing opportunities but also create opportunities for himself;

102: "I think I have to help myself more after this programme, because the government cannot help me if I don't help myself. I have to take initiative myself and be able to do things myself after this programme"

The transition from the introduction programme to an education like high school or university education is usually decided by an examination known as the B2 exams which is a Norwegian proficiency exam that allows successful candidates to be able to start or continue their education here in Norway, while the A2 examination is usually enough for adult immigrants who want to simply settle for the labour market without having to go to school.

103: "For me personally, I need B2 to continue my education, so if I pass the B2 exam, it will help me to continue my education..."

The decision to either get an education or look for work is usually a personal decision to make. This decision is usually discussed with the immigration office consultant and during the introduction programme, each participant is groomed towards achieving this decision through their personal plan. The socio-economic gains from immigration depends largely to what degree immigrants can use their previously and newly acquired skills. Many immigrants who settle in Norway have skills from education and work experience in their country of origin. Many of them also obtain additional education and work experience in Norway during the introduction programme. Efforts to recognise and mobilise these skills in the labour market are important for the supply of labour needed in Norway and the integration of the immigrants into the Norwegian society. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) has the authority to make decision regarding the general recognition of foreign higher education qualification that an applicant possesses. (Thorud, 2017, s. 48)

Most of my informants who had already completed their university education back home especially the doctors, were mostly in a limbo state of mind as they were not too sure about their next move. They all want to work as doctors in Norway, something which cannot be

possible without their education being approved by NOKUT. What was even more problematic for them, was not knowing if their education will be approved or not, how long it will take and what exactly they will be doing in the mean time and if at all it was not approved, how motivated are they to start all over again. Informant 105 expressed himself with slight regrets, and even though I cannot say that I fully understand his frustration, one sure thing was that I could feel it in his words;

105: "I think to some extent it was a waste of time for me to come here with an education, because I feel like they just want me to have a job as quick as possible. I have worked hard all my life to become what I am and now that I am in Norway I want to do the same, ,but sometimes it feels like they do not really care about my dreams... the introduction programme has a lot of advantages but also the disadvantages are many especially because of the immigration office.

I have slowly become familiar to these sorts of narratives expressed by informant 105 during the past years living in Norway. I have personally met people who were professors, engineers, journalists and even diplomats in their home countries settle for lesser jobs and status in Norway due to language barriers, little acceptance for their expertise and sometimes simply lack of opportunities for them to prove themselves. Informant 105 came to Norway as a doctor from Turkey, and the only dream he has ever had in his life is to work as a doctor and now there is a high possibility that coming to Norway was indirectly putting an end to that dream. Are we being pessimistic or simply being realistic? The opportunities are endless for participants like informant 105, that is if only he is ready to settle for less, like for example work in a nursing home or perhaps go back to school for a few more years and these are some of the guarantees that attending the introduction programme can give to its participants. However, what is not guaranteed is the fulfilment of dreams which travelled with them across borders. These sort of standardisation also includes collectivisation, that usually affects highly educated participants like informant 105, since they have the expectations of living the same lifestyle and having the same status they had back in their home countries (Djuve et al. 2017).

Most of my informants who were in the introduction programme class that purposely prepared them for high school already knew what the nearest future holds for them. Some of them will be starting high school in August of 2020 and while some were very excited, others were somewhat nervous about the new coming chapter in their lives. On the other hand, participants like informant 110, understood that education was no longer an option for him

because of his age and present situation. He understood that he was fully responsible for using the tools and information gathered from the introduction programme in order to fit in the majority society through the labour market.

I10: “ I will have to look for a job by myself... I think I am a bit old to go back to school and I have a family, so I need t find a job after I finish here...”

The bottom line with the opportunities that attending the introduction programme creates is that it gives its participants the necessary tools like for example learning the language, culture, norms, information about the society and practical help with school enrolment or finding a job through created contacts and through the work practice. All of my informants understand that after two years, the ball of integration will remain in their court.

4.4.3 The Dilemma of Equal Opportunities

According to the acts relating to equality and prohibition against discrimination (Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act), the Norwegian Ministry of culture passed a law which entered into force on the 01.01.2018 with the purpose of; *“preventing discrimination on the basis of gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age or other significant characteristics of a person”*. *“Equality means equal status, equal opportunities and equal rights. Equality presupposes accessibility and accommodation. “This Act has the particular objective of improving the position of women and minorities. This act shall help to dismantle disabling barriers created by society and prevent new ones from being created. “This Act shall apply in all sectors of the society”* Lastly updated on the 16.01.2020 by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture (LOVDATA, 2018)

Prior to conducting the interviews with my informants and also carrying out this research in general, I understood that there is usually a disparity between what happens in reality and what we know in theory. Many of my informants expressed the practical difficulties they encounter as foreigners living in Norway and also as participants in the introduction programme. It is not my objective in this thesis to rant about the social or institutional disparities or inequalities between the minority and majority population in Norway, neither is it my intention to be an advocate of change for such inequalities. My objective for this thesis remains to understand from an unbiased point of view, the perspectives of my informants regarding their journey and negotiation to integration through the introduction programme, in order to answer my research question. I always live by the proverb that says “failing to

prepare is preparing to fail” which is a guiding principle for the preparation of the future and even though the future remains uncertain, it should never stop us for preparing for it. In order to understand the mindset of my ten informants in regards to their futures in Norway, I asked them a very typical question which was “where do you see yourself in five year?” and the purpose for this question was to create an atmosphere where they could freely speak about their dreams, before we could get into the issue of their dreams and aspirations having equal chances to fruition compared to that of the majority population. Almost all of my informants expressed optimism while answering this question:

103: “Hahaha.. this is a typical Norwegian question.. I don’t know, maybe I will be working or finishing my education. Maybe I will be married, I don’t really have plans but anything is possible”

Informant 103 was amused by the question and he explained that it was a typical Norwegian question for reasons that he had heard it uncountable times. Being in the introduction programme is almost like being in buss trip that last two years with the final destination being integration. Usually, it is common for people to focus on their destinations when they embark on a new journey and for many of my informants, their focus is integration because that is the destination that the journey of the introduction programme is taking to. It is therefore not surprising that many of my informants have heard the typical Norwegian question being asked to them several times, because we often focus on our destinations and our outcomes which are usually uncertain, however we tend to create certainty around it through our present endeavours. There is absolutely no point of being in the introduction programme if one does not have integration as a destination, because it does not only become a waste of time for the participant but also a waste of resources for the Norwegian government. This is therefore one of the reasons why it is practical to ask this very general but yet typical question of where people see themselves in the next five years, so that through the expression of their dreams and wishes, they may work hard for it to happen just the way they beautifully dreamed of it in their minds. Five years is enough time to better ones language skills, finish studies and start work for many of my informants and most importantly be contributing members of the society as the integration policy stipulates. The introduction programme has directly and indirectly conditioned my informants to understand that they have their place in the Norwegian society and this can be seen through their expressions concerning their dreams.

104: “Maybe I will be a journalist, show the Norwegian people what is happening in the world as a refugee... I also want to be a freelance journalist and I also want to work in the UDI, IMDi or the immigration office, because I want to make a difference and show people how a consultant can make a difference. I also just want to be happy and have a normal life.”

Statistics show that unemployment rates are higher for immigrants than for the native population and the degree of school drop outs is higher within the immigrant population compared to that of the majority population. There is also a huge disparity among immigrant population in regards to country, and also in regards to gender (Thorud, 2017). The statistics backing up these facts are endless. To conclude that the disparities between the immigrant population and the majority population are solely as a result of discrimination be it racially, ethnically, ideologically or even culturally will be a fallacy, however to ignore these disparities or simply base them on the idea of incompetence like for example language, skills and expertise will also be a fallacy in itself. This therefore means that the issue of discrimination and equal opportunity is a dilemma that does not have a one answer fit all. As a result, during my interviews, I asked my informants what their take on this issue was and if they thought they had equal opportunities to the native Norwegians. The objective of this research is understanding the perception of my informants in regards to the issues at hand and the importance of perception especially in the integration phenomenon is very relevant because perception is taught and with different perceptions comes different views and ways of dealing with different situations (Dixon and Jones, 2006). The journey of integration of some of my informants or any immigrant for that matter is highly influenced by their perception towards the majority and the host society as a whole. The fear of failure is usually worse than actual failure itself, meaning that if my informants are afraid to fail in their integration process without even trying simply because they believe that their dreams are not valid in Norway or that they do not have the same opportunities as the majority population, they then subconsciously decide to settle for less or entirely stop dreaming because they see no point in trying.

102: “No. they don’t tell you, but I know they don’t want foreigner to have high status job. They want us to simply have jobs that can make us pay tax and be part of the system, and they believe Norwegian deserve the high status jobs. I think this is the reality, but they don’t tell us. “

According to informant 102, the laws concerning equality in regards to opportunities for all does not actually apply in reality. Even though these are argumentative claims, the fact remains that immigrant populations are lagging behind for several reasons. All of my ten informants had the same mindset towards this issue of equal opportunities and they all agreed that even though the opportunities were equal on paper, there were a lot of disparities in reality. While some took a more generous approach like for example blaming it on their skills others took a more radical approach by blaming such inequalities on their ethnicity and identity;

104: "...yes, I believe we have equal opportunities, but I know it will take time for me to grab these opportunities...Sometimes it is hard to say, because I have a friends called Muhammad who has applied for a job many times and didn't get it because of his name, which makes it hard for us sometimes... I do not want to change my name just to get a job and also I know that things will not be easy but I will fight hard for it... but at the end of the day I also expect them to offer me the same. Actually... I think the opportunities are not the same, so I will say no."

Alexis de Tocqueville (1969.1835-40) suggested that the idea of equality easily leads to a search for identity, in other words to the idea that people have to feel that they are more or less the same in order to be of equal value. This tendency is particularly strong in the Nordic countries, and can be analysed as a cultural specific way of resolving tension between the individual and the community (Gullestad, 2002). Informant 104 emphasises on the need to retain his identity, by not wanting to change his name. In order to have their desired identities confirmed, people like informant 104 need relevant others who are able and willing to recognise and support them. According to the logic involved, the relevant supporters are other people who are regarded as similar, and this often leads to an interaction style in which commonalities are emphasised, while differences are played down, something which Gullestad (2002), terms "imagined sameness". The fact that most of my informants have only lived in Norway for two years at most, but yet could already have such perceptions about the realities they think awaits them in the society after they have completed the introduction programme is to me a sign of awareness. This awareness comes as a result of knowledge gotten through information, experience and subjective perceptions. Am I saying that my informants are wrong for thinking that opportunities are not equal in Norway ? definitely not, but I am not saying they are right either because the complexity of this issue cannot be settled by a one sided answer. Many of my informants understand that they simply have to be double

motivated, which is understandable especially if they want to catch up to the already established native Norwegians who have had their whole lives to establish themselves in this country.

107: "I am a foreigner and there is no equal opportunities for us, the way I live my life, the way I speak and behave is not the same like with Norwegians, so I don't think we have the same opportunities... But I believe if I work harder than normal, I might be able to grab some of the opportunities we have, but it will never be the same, my name is not Lars or Ola and I do not have blue eyes..."

It is just pure logic that the opportunities available to immigrants in Norway takes time to grasp due to the long and exhausting transition and adaptation process many of these immigrants have to experience. Informant 107 understands that he has to work harder than normal in order to compete with ethnic Norwegians who have an upper hand over him. This upper hand that the majority has over the minority might necessarily not have anything to do with ethnicity, race, ideologies or any prejudice or stigmatisation for that matter, as many immigrants may think, but rather a lot to do with the long process of transition and adaptation like language proficiency and understanding the system, the culture and how things operate in general.

4.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Chapter four has dealt with the finding and interpretation of my empirical data. In this chapter, I have attempted to answer my research question by interpreting and analysing the data collected through the interviews with my ten informants. I decomposed the chapter in three sub chapters whereby I started analysing and discussing the impacts that the introduction programme has on its participants. Secondly I discussed the challenges that my informants face in the introduction programme in particular and in their integration process in general. Lastly, I discussed the opportunities created through the introduction programme and the general dilemmas surrounding equal opportunities between minority and majority population in Norway. The theoretical and methodological framework of this research study has been to shed light on my research question from a micro perspective, something which I have made apparent In this chapter by carefully selecting and presenting relevant data from my interviews in order to achieve the objectives enumerated above.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSION AND CONCLUSION

In the final segment of this thesis, I will briefly discuss some key aspects of this research study and show how some of my empirical finding corroborates to theoretical frameworks which guided me throughout this research. Moreover, a presentation of some limitations and suggestions for further studies will be made and finally, I will end the chapter with a brief summary and concluding remarks.

5.1 Does Education or Labour Guarantee Integration?

One thing which is very evident throughout this research study, is the fact that there is no absolute roadmap to integration, due to the complexity of the notion in itself. The research question such as it is *“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”* explores the complexities experienced by immigrants in their integration process through the introduction programme. A central question which one could perhaps want to have a clear answer to, is if education or participation in the labour market guarantees integration? And if it does, what type of integration does this guarantee and if it doesn't, what exactly guarantees integration after all? The introduction programme for many immigrants operates like a bridge that connects them to the society at large and their success from attending this programme will be determined by their enrolment in an education or by joining the labour market. The term integration is a very complex term and at the same time subjective to many extents as I have discussed through out this thesis. Integration is almost like beauty; it lies in the eyes of the beholder. What I consider integration may necessarily not be what my informants or anybody else considers integration. But, beauty can sometimes be objective, the kind of beauty that appeals to the eyes of the majority, and therefore one could also view integration in that light, from an objective perspective like for example being part of the society through the labour market, paying tax and contributing to the common good.

From a theoretical perspective, Inclusion gives ethnical minorities the opportunity to be part of the society at large, like for example through work. While exclusion on the other hand entails a rejection of the ethnical minority through discriminatory processes (Said, 2001) which can lead to lack of participation in the labour market, and the society as a whole, something which is very apparent in my research, since, unemployment only leads to social inequality and poverty which is not desirable in a democratic society, and thus making labour market a key arena for integrating immigrants (Andersen, 2005, s. 78). Integration could be

social, economical or cultural. Sometimes immigrants are economically integrated by participating in the labour market and yet lack social or cultural integration and vice versa. Through education and participation in the labour market after attending the introduction programme, many immigrants become more exposed to the ethnic majority and the decision to socially or culturally integrate remains theirs to make. The integration programme or any Norwegian integration policy for that matter does not in any way guarantees social or cultural integration, because these are aspects of integration that every immigrant is directly responsible for. “The individual immigrant shall be met with the expectation and requirement that s/he is to contribute and participate, and considerable effort is expected of the individual and at the same time, society must take steps to ensure that every one can make use of their capacities in the labour market and community life” (Thorud, 2017). It is without any doubts that the Norwegian society has taken steps to ensure that immigrants in Norway make use of their capacities through many fruitful integration measures like the introduction programme, however, my research shows that the aspect of “community life” for many of these immigrants remains debatable, since many of them are yet to be socio-culturally integrated, some out of free will due to their fear of being assimilated, and for others due to lack of inclusion from the ethnic majority.

5.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Throughout this research study, there was not a single moment where I did not feel like exceeding the limitations and constraints I had put around the research. Staying in the perimeters of my research question and not going out of topic was perhaps one of the hardest things to do and the reason is because the introduction programme and the notion of integration in general is a gigantic and complex field. One could study integration and the participation of adult immigrants in the introduction programme from many different perspectives which are almost endless. In this thesis, I made the decision to carry out my research from a micro perspective by putting the participants of the introduction programme at the centre of my data collection process and hence analysing the findings from the data collected during the in-depth interviews in order to answer my research question. However, I could not help but notice that more research needed to be done from a macro-perspective in regards to the practical implementation of some of the integration policies from a structural point of view, starting from the job done at the immigration office right down to the responsibility of private actors in the society like employers and employees during the work practice of the introduction programme participants.

Integration as a notion is known for its complexity for reasons being that it can mean different things to different people, even though we can agree to an extent that there are aspects of integration that are objective as I have earlier discussed. The introduction programme's number one objective is to integrate its participants in the labour market or education which mostly ends up in economic integration for these participants, something which could be considered objective integration for example. Moreover, one thing which I noticed during my research is that, there are lesser emphasis on the socio-cultural aspects of integration both in the integration policies as a whole and the introduction programme in particular. As earlier mentioned in my theoretical chapter, Entzinger (2002) points out that integration of immigrants and minority groups in Western countries usually fail because the authorities do not integrate these new society members in all the necessary arenas. Socio-cultural integration is a very important aspect of community life and the fact that almost all of informants expressed their dissatisfaction towards the lack of emphasis in this area of integration, only meant that more research needs to be carried out in order to create and implement better solutions for this aspect of integration or simply raise more awareness around it.

Furthermore, the issue of individually adapted plans not being so individual in reality was also an eye opener. More research needs to be done on the creation, adaptation and implementation of these individual plans as my research shows that most of the dissatisfaction of my informants stem from the lack of individuality in the introduction programme. The rugged relationship between many participants and their consultants at the immigration office due to miscommunication and lack of mutual understanding is as a result of generalisation and lack of individuality since many participants feel that they are not being personally heard and many consultants tend to operate standardly by putting all these participants in the same basket, hence the clash. There is a reasons why the introduction programme has individually tailored plans for its participants, which means that it is deemed important and necessary for a better execution of the introduction programme. The fact that immigrants in general and participants in the introduction programme in particular are such a diverse group, with different backgrounds, dreams and aspirations, means that running a general programme with standardised solutions does not allow for large differences amongst them (Eide & Røhnebak, 2016). More research around the setbacks and impediments arising as a result of lack of effective individual plans, therefore needs to be carried out in this regard.

5.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Contemporary refugee integration policies in advanced western democracies are clearly influenced by concepts, theories and empirical findings which have been produced and developed by sociologists and other social scientists since the beginning of the last century. Although theories of general integration processes still generate valuable insights, it was in fact through a series of refugee and immigration studies that the concept of integration gained theoretical and analytical momentum (Park, 1928). The responsible authorities also recognised that particular minority groups have particular needs and the solution for this was formulating and implementing “integration policies” from the 1970s in order to meet the needs of these targeted immigrant population (Valenta & Bunad, 2010). The introduction programme as we know it today is one of the offspring of these integration policies aimed at integrating the minority population in the society through education or the labour market. My main objective for this research has been to shed light on the two-faced process of integration by understanding how the integration of adult immigrants in Norway is negotiated through participation in the introduction programme. This thesis has therefore attempted to answer the following research question; *“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”*

It was clearly stated from the beginning of this thesis that the theoretical framework upon which this research study is built takes a micro perspective, meaning the participants of the introduction programme were at the centre of my data collection process. This also means that the methodological approach used in this research was a qualitative approach whereby in-depth interviews were conducted with ten informants as a primary source of data collection. After collecting and interpreting my data, some of the key findings and conclusions which I arrived at in regards to my research question was that the introduction programme only remains a means rather than an end to the process of integration. Moreover, some of the impacts of the introduction programme which cannot go unnoticed are the increase in language skills of its participants and financial independence among other things. However, during this research, a lot of the impediments the participants of the introduction programme face was also brought to my attention, like the work practise challenges, challenges with the immigration office and slow adaptation in general etc. Even though most of my informants expressed the same frustrations and challenges, I noticed that the successful process of integration and the opportunities created from the introduction programme are heavily reliant on each individual and their ability to be able to proactively grab the opportunities they have.

This means that the personal characteristics of an immigrant, like their ability to learn quick, their resilience, their mindset and perception of society, plays a huge role in their successful journey to integration.

This thesis contributes to the better understanding of the process of integration from a micro perspective and the negotiations which the individual participant in the introduction programme engages with, both internally in their meetings with immigration office, their consultants, teachers and other immigrants and also externally with the society at large, especially during their work practice, creating friendships with ethnic Norwegians and generally trying to fit in.

A phenomenon and notion as important as integration in Norway today, and the patchwork of features it designates, needs to be closely scrutinized in the context of its practical operational domains (Valenta & Bunad, 2010). As I have reiterated through out this thesis, integration is a two-faced process of fitting in, which means that both the minority and the majority have equal responsibility in this process. Some immigrants have argued that more responsibility lies in the hands of the majority or government while other immigrants believe that they themselves are more responsible for their integration than any other persons. What ever the case may be, the fact remains that in order to have a smoother process of integration for immigrants in Norway, the government has to continuously create and consolidate platforms and measures that allows these immigrants to grab the opportunities available to them in their integration process, hence the “two-faced” metaphor.

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APENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introductory Questions

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself
2. What type of immigrant are you?
3. Do you think it is hard being an immigrant in a foreign country?
4. Are you familiar with the term integration? Tell me what you understand by this term
5. Do you feel like an important part of the Norwegian society?
6. Do you have any Norwegian friends? What do you do together? And how do they treat you? Do you feel included?
7. Can you tell me how different the Norwegian culture is, from your culture back home?
8. What is your biggest fear as an immigrant living in Norway.
9. Do you agree that integration is very important? Who do you think is most responsible for your integration in Norway. You or the Norwegian

General Introduction Programme Questions

1. You are a student in the introduction program. Can you tell me when and how you became a student in this program.
2. Tell me what you like most about being a student in this program. Also what you don't like.
3. What exactly is the introduction program? Tell me why you are in it
4. How much have you learned about Norway since you started the intro-program (Culture, politics, ethics etc). How did you learn these things
5. When and where do you mostly speak Norwegian?, and how comfortable do you feel when speaking around Norwegians? Are you shy? or afraid of mistakes when you speak?
6. What changes have you noticed in your life as a foreigner living in Norway since you started this program? (Language skills, social awareness, etc)

7. Do you get a lot of advice from you teachers? What do you think is the best advice they have ever given you concerning your life in Norway.
8. Tell me about your personal time table or plan for the introduction program ?

Reflecting Over Possible Challenges

- 1.What is the most difficult thing for you living in Norway as a foreigner? (language culture etc) "
- 2.Language is a very important tool for integration. How do you feel about your Norwegian language skills right now
- 3.Do you sometimes feel demotivated or feel like not going to school some days. Is the introduction program difficult? Explain.
- 4.The introduction program is a two year program. Do you think two years is enough for this program? Or do you think you need more time and why?
- 5.If you were not in this program today, what would you be doing with your time?
- 6.Do you have any friends or know any body that has completed the intro-program before you? What are they doing in life now? (Studying or working?)
- 7.Do you feel that you get the necessary help needed through this program? (From the commune, teachers and the Norwegian society in general?)
- 8.What do you have to say about the introduction grant you get during this program? (is it enough? Does it motivate you? And what are you supposed to do with the money)
9. Have you had any practical training yet? Where was this and what did you do? How do you feel bout it.

Reflecting Over Possible Opportunities

- 1.what was the first thing you remember being told when you started the program? (By teachers or the commune. What to expect after completing the program and what life will be like for you)
2. How exactly do you think attending this program will help you get work? Or start an education? What are the advantages of attending this program?
3. Do you have any idea on how the commune will help you after you are done with the two years of the program? For example to find work, school. Contact persons etc.

4. Where do you see yourself in 5 years from now? Do you have any idea how you will make this dreams come through?
5. Do you intend to move to a bigger city after you done with the program? (Why?). Do you think that it is easier to integrate in a bigger city or a small city? Explain
6. Do you personally feel that Norwegians are doing enough to include and integrate you in the Norwegian society? (friends, social gatherings etc) AND Are you personally doing enough to include yourself? (How?)
7. What is your dream job and has that dream job changed since you moved to Norway? Why?
8. Has attending the introduction program so far, made you more aware of the things happening in Norway? And do you feel like life will be easier for you after you are done?
9. Does having an education and a job as a foreigner in Norway automatically mean you are integrated? Or do you think it takes more to be integrated. What is you view on this?
10. Norway is a country of many opportunities. Do you personally believe that you have equal opportunities as a foreigner compared to ethnic Norwegians? Why or why not

APENDIX 2: ANONYMISED PARTICIPANTS PORTRAIT

Below is a brief description of each participant in their own words:

Informant 101: *“I am from Turkey and I am 27 years old, I am married with no children, and I have been in Norway 1 year and a half“*

Informant 102: *“I am from Turkey, I am 28 years old, I studied medicine in the university and I am a doctor who does not work, also never worked in my country because of the political situation and I came to Norway 2 years ago”*

Informant 103: *I came from Eritrea in Africa. I used to be a physics teacher in high school. I moved to Norway in 2018, I am single with no children*

Informant 104: *I come from Turkey and I am almost 29 years old. I was working in Turkey in a security agency about policing and national security. I have two different bachelors, one in law and another one in international trade and business*

Informant 105: *I was born in Turkey in a city called Kayseri and I lived there all my life, went to school and worked there. I studied medicine and I worked as a doctor for 5 months before coming to Norway. I came to Norway in June of 2018 and I am 28 years old...*

Informant 106: *I come from Asmara Eritrea, I am married with no children and I am 31 years old. I came to Norway in September 2017*

Informant 107: *I come from Syria but I am a Kurdish and I am 21 years old. I came to Norway in December of 2017. I am not married, no children... I was almost finished with high school but I had to live in Syria because of war...*

Informant 108: *I am from Eritrea and I am born in a small village where I attended elementary school and after high school I joined the national service and after that I came to Norway. I am 25 years old, I am married but my wife is still in Eritrea... I came to Norway in 2017, almost three years ago...*

Informant 109: *I came from Syria to Norway 3 years ago. I lived in the camp for 9 months before I got my residence permit. I am 21 years old, I am not married and have no children. I worked as a salesman and a hair dresser in my country. I have high school education from my country...*

Informant 110: *I am from Ethiopia and I came to Norway 2 years ago. I was carpenter in my home country and I am 31 years old.*

APENDIX 3: CONSENT & INFORMATION LETTER (NSD)

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme”?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to first and foremostly complete my Master`s education. In this regard, I seek to **study the Integration process of adult immigrants in Norway**. In this letter, I will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

This research study is based on the Integration process of adult immigrants with my research question being *“How is the integration of adult immigrants in Norway through labour and education negotiated by participating in the introduction programme?”*

I am currently enrolled in the Social Science Department as a Master student in Public Administration at the Nord University in Bodø.

Education and labour have been classified by the Norwegian government as the two most important measures of integrating foreigners in Norway. This is one of the reasons why these two measures are the focal point in what is known as the “Introduction Programme” which is aimed at integrating immigrants via education with the hope of integrating them in the society in general. In this research, I seek to find out and understand the narrative and perspective of some adult immigrants regarding the issue at hand, and how being enrolled in the introduction program, has affected and impacted their journey to integration in Norway so far.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The Nord University in Bodø is the institution responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

My request for you participation comes as a result of you being enrolled in the introduction programme as an adult immigrant. Since the whole research is built upon a micro perspective,

it is important that I get first hand information from the people who are at the centre of the introduction programme and therefore using you as my primary source of data collection. This therefore means that the only criteria used in my sample selection is; the informant should be actively enrolled in the introduction programme; the informant should be above the age of 18 years old; The informant should be able to express themselves and reflect on the subject matter.

What does participation involve for you?

During the process of your participation, an interview will be carried out which will last approximately one hour. During this interview, a collection of data will be made through an audio recorder and some notes will also be taken in the process.

I will be asking questions ranging from enquiries about your personal life on an introductory phase like for example where you come from, educational background, civil status etc, to enquiries about participation in the introduction program and other questions related to your integration journey. You will also be free to add any remarks or comments of your own, that you feel might be important to this study and to reflect to the best of your ability.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

The supervisor in connection to this project who will have complete access to this project before, during and after its completion is Professor Astri Dankertsen

I can also assure you as a participant that there are no known risks whatsoever to the participation of this research study which also means that both your identity and responses will remain confidential and anonymous. This means that, neither your name or contact details will be presented, as they shall be replaced with a code. The list of names, contact

details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data and the data will be locked and encrypted and later on deleted after the completion of this project.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end on 15.05.2020. After this, all personal data collected shall be deleted from any device used during the collection process. Again, everything else will be anonymised meaning your privacy and personal information is safe.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent. Based on an agreement with Nord University Bodø, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Nord University Bodø via Student: Franck Johanssen, frankyp93@ymail.com (90207225). Supervisor : Astri Dankertsen Astri.dankertsen@nord.no (90919792)
- Our Data Protection Officer: personvernombud@nord.no (74022750)
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: (personvertjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Astri Dankertsen
(Researcher/supervisor)

Student: Franck Johanssen

I have received and understood information about the project *[insert project title]* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in an interview in which an audio record shall be made use of.

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 15.05.2020

(Signed by participant, date)