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Declaration

I, Patrick Grigorian Tamrat, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

Date: 03-06-2010

Dedication

In loving memory of my father Tamrat Haile Selassie

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Abstract

Norway is a country that has its own integration policy regarding immigrants. By using the qualitative research method, it is the aim of this study to look at the lives of eighteen Ethiopian immigrant women living in Oslo and within the framework of this current integration policy. By analysing their daily-basis life experiences as well as their thoughts and opinions regarding their host country and its ethnic Norwegian majority, the study aims to determine the forms of these women's integration.

The purpose of the study is to find out does such integration policy drive the Ethiopian immigrant women towards integration in form of assimilation or multiculturalism? Do these women have their own methods and views on how they should fit into the Norwegian society? Is it their aim to integrate voluntarily or otherwise? How does the integration policy affect these women psychological integration wise?

The study shows that there are many factors in the lives of these women when it comes to the opportunity and possibility for their close and constant interaction with the ethnic Norwegian majority on personal and professional levels. Subsequently, their forms of structural, social, cultural and identificational integration differ individually. In addition, according to the findings the women's different level of education is of high significance for their mobility and ability to interact within the Norwegian society.

Whether the women regard their daily experiences in Norway as positive or negative differ individually, consequently, their views and opinions regarding their host society vary accordingly.

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1. Introduction

This study focuses on the first generation of Ethiopian immigrant women living in Oslo, and the effects the Norwegian government's integration policy on the daily lives of these women. That means that these women's different forms of integration in the Norwegian society are analyzed.

I chose this particular topic, because it is essential for all immigrants/minorities to be part of various processes that occur in their host country. Immigrants' abilities to fit into their host society in certain forms are referred to as integration. Having an integration policy in a country is supposed to give minorities a (in this case, the Ethiopian immigrant women living in Oslo) a better possibility of understanding, relating and accepting their host country and its ethnic majority. It is believed that immigrants/minorities would get necessary knowledge and opportunities to participate in structural, social, cultural, political arenas of that country.

Over the past three decades, different Norwegian governments implemented integration policies for minorities that varied with time as well as national and international political weather. Presently, among minorities living in Norway, there are Ethiopian immigrant women whose lives are shaped by the framework of the current integration policy. Though these women have a common country of origin, each one of them is an individual with unique traits. Thus, each immigrant woman living under the umbrella of the Norwegian integration policy fits in the Norwegian society structurally, socially, culturally and psychologically in her individual way.

The main questions are whether the current Norwegian integration policy which is based on non-discrimination, equal individual human rights and opportunities for everyone regardless of their ethnicity, gender, culture, educational and social backgrounds, gives the possibility for the Ethiopian immigrant women to be accepted as equals by the ethnic Norwegian majority, and have equal opportunities and rights as the later? Do these women get to avoid structural, cultural and social isolation? Are their structural, cultural, social and psychological experiences, views and opinions limited to their local ethnical communities?

Do these women have the wish, the opportunity and the possibility to socially interact with the ethnic Norwegians in varied institutional settings, such as schools, work, religious and family gatherings, not as foreigners but as individuals who are practically and psychologically integrated in the Norwegian society in forms they consider acceptable? Considering that Norway is presently acknowledged as a multicultural society, does the current integration policy give these women the opportunity to be able to integrate structurally as well as culturally as they see fit and hoped for, in accordance to their background, culture and heritage?

This study focuses on the lives of eighteen Ethiopian immigrant women, of different age, cultural, social and educational backgrounds, political views and migrating experiences, in order to examine their daily experiences, views and opinions regarding the Norwegian society. What are the forms of their integration within the Norwegian society? What effects does the integration policy currently being implemented by the Norwegian authorities have on these women's daily lives, and their psychological state? In addition, the study focuses on, these women's relationship with their host society.

1.1 Background of the study

Over the past three decades, the Norwegian society has gone from being regarded as homogeneous to a multicultural one, such acknowledgement of facts made it indispensable for some kind of policies which took into accounts the needs as well as individualities of immigrants/minorities. Consequently, policies referring to the possible integration of the immigrants/minorities living in this country were drafted and put into action.

In this study, I refer to immigrants/minorities in the context of ethnic or immigrant minorities. According to Kymlicka (1997:6), unlike national, minorities such as the French speaking Quebecers, the Sámi population in Norway, etc. immigrant minorities are not historically settled or territorially concentrated and whose previously self-governing cultures and territory have become incorporated into a larger state.

All immigrants living in Norway are part of minorities living in this country and do not constitute a homogeneous group. The backgrounds of theses minorities vary religiously, culturally and geographically. In addition, there are differences among individual members of any given nationality or ethnic group when it comes to education, political and philosophical views, their status in their society and world views. The backgrounds of minorities vary in forms of culture, religion, personal characteristics and individual experiences. Among other things, cultural, linguistic and psychological factors play important roles in immigrants' abilities to integrate in their host society, as well on the forms of their integration.

Referring to most of the ethnic majorities in Western countries, Helleland and Hansen (2008) stated their opinion: "We are products of a Western society with considerable individualistic traits. Individualistic societies focus among other things on autonomy, independence and individualism" (Helleland & Hansen, 2008:72). According to Hofstede (1991) 'individualism' can be defined as pertaining to societies "in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her family" (Hofstede, 1991:51).

More than twenty years now, Ethiopian women have been migrating and settling in Norway. Different reasons bring them to this country; some of them come as political or humanitarian refugees or asylum seekers, others come as result of family reunification or marriage to ethnic Norwegian men or to Ethiopian men with permanent residence in this country.

The 1951 Convention of the United Nations (UN) defined a refugee as "someone who is outside his/her country of origin; has a well founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail him/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution" (UNHCR, 1999). An asylum seeker is an individual who enters a country on his own, in the quest of getting a refugee status and being granted asylum in that country (op. cit.).

Theoretically, integration of these immigrants implies their behavioral change or adjustment, giving them greater awareness and opportunity to be part of the processes that occur in the host society. Since Norway has not been viewed as a homogenous society for the last three

decades, it is time for some features of multiculturalism policies to be implemented. Ethiopian immigrant women being part of the minorities of this country should be able to retain some of their background, social and cultural features they deem necessary as long as their actions do not contradict the laws of Norway.

There are distinctions among all women, including the Ethiopian immigrant women. They are of different ages, cultural, religious backgrounds and heritage, their purposes and experiences of migrating to Norway and length of stay in this country vary as well. Thus, it can be considered that the Norwegian integration policy shapes these women's lives through their daily experiences differently and individually. Nevertheless, there can be common and similar experiences, views and opinions among the women as result of such integration policy.

1.2 A brief overview of the informants' country of origin

Ethiopia is a sub-Saharan country in the East part of the African continent. With its population approximately of 85 million inhabitants, Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa. It has a total area of 1,104,300 sq km, and is landlocked bordering with five countries. Regarding religion, among the population of Ethiopia there are Orthodox Christians (50, 6%), Muslims (32, 8%), Protestants (10, 2%), traditional (4, 6%), other (1, 8%) (CIA, 2009).

1.3 Statement of the problem

Since Norway is considered a multicultural society, Ethiopian immigrant women should be able to adapt and fit into the Norwegian society, either in the form of assimilation with the majority ethnic Norwegians, by developing and changing their lives in all aspects, or by adopting some of the values and traditions of 'universal' liberal-individualist secular values of the Norwegian society, nevertheless retaining some of their cultural heritage. In turn, that should give them possibility to become integrated in one form or another as equals with the ethnic Norwegians in all in aspects of the processes that occur in the society. In addition, the current integration policy might lead these women towards identificational (psychological) integration.

Despite the different integration policies adopted by different western countries including Norway, in order to ensure Immigrants/minorities equal rights, opportunities, treatment and non-discrimination, there is still a margin for subjecting immigrants/minorities to informal and institutionalized racism and social exclusion.

Accordingly, reality on the ground sometimes show that immigrants mostly from developing non-white developing countries (which the Ethiopian immigrant women are part of) can be stigmatized, isolated and not be able to integrate into the host society in forms they wanted and hoped for. Another outcome can be that these women might be structurally, socially and culturally fully or partially integrated, but that does not necessarily lead to their psychological integration.

One can assume and hope that the Norwegian integration policy would enable these Ethiopian immigrant women to live and function as they see fit within the framework of the Norwegian legal system at the same level and equal opportunities as the ethnic Norwegian majority. As part of the integration policy, the 'introduction program' for immigrants was introduced by the Norwegian policy makers as a step to facilitate their integration process. This is supposed to enable new settlers from other countries to better understand or accept the differences in culture, religion, etc. and subsequently help them with their mobility within the society. Since the Norwegian integration policy is based on equal rights for everyone, it gives the opportunity to people of different ethnicities to coexist as equals with equal opportunities.

But having laws and theories on paper is one thing; whether such policies have beneficial effects on the daily lives of these Ethiopian immigrant women in reality is another question. Thus, what are the practical effects of the integration policy on these women's lives?

The reality is that it is impossible to achieve the assimilation of immigrants/minorities as a form of their integration within the Norwegian society. As the study shows further that most of "so-called 'ethnic minorities' have indeed formed strongly marked, cultural communities, and maintain in everyday life, especially in familial and domestic contexts, distinctive social customs and practices. There are continuing links with their places of origin" (Hall, 2000: 219).

1.4 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to examine what effects the current integration policy of Norway has on the daily lives and views of eighteen Ethiopian immigrant women living in Oslo. The aim was to find out in what forms are these women integrated structurally, socially, culturally and identificational wise in the Norwegian society? Does such integration policy give them the possibility to shape their lives in ways they saw fit and hoped for? Or, does the framework of such policy just allows them to live in Norway making inevitable and/or forced practical and psychological compromises in their daily lives, as part of conditions for their ability and possibility to permanently reside and function in this country? Do some of these women remain deeply committed to their traditional practices, while others try to assimilate with the ethnic Norwegian majority by adopting as norms the ways of living of Western societies?

In some circumstances, factors such as racism and hostilities by some members of the ethnic Norwegian majority towards these women, the constant changing of world condition (e.g. the rising salience of Islam) can transform these women's so-called traditional identifications by intensifying them.

An important factor that is considered in this study is that within the Ethiopian Diaspora, as in most minority Diasporas in Norway, traditions can vary from person to person. These traditions can be susceptible to constant revision and transformation in response to the individual migrating and other experience.

So, like all immigrants/minorities, these Ethiopian immigrant women's experiences and forms of interaction within the Norwegian society vary individually. The purpose of this research is to find out how different factors shape their lives and thoughts in this country.

In order to determine what forms does the integration of these Ethiopian immigrant women living in the Norwegian society have, and what are their views and opinions regarding their host country and its ethnic majority the conducted study focuses on:

- Where do the Ethiopian immigrant women find themselves integration wise in relation to the Norwegian governments` integration policies? What are their daily experiences, views and opinions regarding the society they live in?
- What are their thoughts regarding integration and is integration their aim in for living in Norway? If integration is the aim for these women, what forms would they like it to have and do they feel that their goals have been achieved?

1.5 Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine in what forms do the Norwegian integration policy adopted by the Norwegian policy makers and the society of ethnic Norwegian majority allow the Ethiopian immigrant women to fit into the Norwegian society on a day to day basis.

In order to get answers to the objective of this study, the following main question and subquestions are designed:

Research questions:

What effects does the Norwegian integration policy have on the eighteen Ethiopian immigrant women's daily lives, views and opinions?

- How are these women positioned in the broader Norwegian society?
- How and in what ways do these women see themselves as integrated in the Norwegian society?
- What do the Ethiopian immigrant women view as integration?
- Where do these women find themselves cultural integration wise in the Norwegian society?
- What are these women's understandings of the Norwegian integration policy?
- Does the Norwegian government's integration policy allow these women to shape their lives and views as they have wanted and hoped for?
- What effects does the Norwegian government's integration policy have on these women's abilities of identificational (psychological) integration towards their host country?

2. Literature review

2.1 Different concepts of integration

The concept of integration does not have a concrete formulation. The understanding of integration of immigrants/minorities varies according to countries, with time, according to people and their culture and backgrounds, according to the situation on the ground, etc. Hekmann (2004:14-15) argues that the concept of integration policies referred also as "national modes of migrant integration" differ from country to country. And the conception that the outcomes resulting from different integration policies will also vary is only an assumption due to the absence of such testing of theory.

Nevertheless, in general terms, according to him the concept of integration of minorities can be defined as "the inclusion of new populations into the existing social structures of the immigration country with a consequent reduction of differences in their positions and relations" (Hekmann, 2004:15).

Trying to put the concept of integration of minorities in a framework Hekmann (2004:15) divides it into four sub-categories of integration, which are structural, cultural, social and identificational. These forms of integration sub-categories are briefly reviewed bellow:

1. Structural integration: Immigrants (minorities) have the same rights and have access to the labor market, housing, training systems, educational systems, citizenship, etc. as the majority of their host countries (ibid).

2. Cultural integration:

The concept of 'culture' is a way of describing a certain pattern of people's behavior. Therefore, similar rules of behavior of people of a given status or position from the same group (e.g. same ethnicity) correspond to people of certain age gender religion, etc. in a certain culture (Barth, 1969:9).

The reference to cultural integration is considered as a heterogeneous area, it relates to the processes of changes or adjustments in attitude, values, behavior and culture by immigrants in daily based practices while living in a new society. These interrelated processes have effects on the ethnic majority population of the host countries as well. Subsequently cultural integration leads to social integration (Hekmann, 2004:19). Cultural integration can be in form of acculturation which can be produced by:

- Mass culture such as radio stations, television programs, plays in theaters, movies in cinemas, etc.
- Everyday practices such as raising children, consuming certain types of food and beverages, as well as different leisure-time activities.
- Language preferences, it means whether immigrants use their mother tongue more often than the official language of the host country when communicating within their families and/or with friends.
- Religion, it means whether immigrants choose to change or retain their religion after their arrival to their new host country (op. cit.).

3. Social integration:

It refers to the changes in immigrants' private relationships and group memberships in forms of social interaction, voluntary associations, friendships, intercultural marriages between individuals of different ethnicities, etc. (op. cit.).

According to Kymlicka (1997:51), the meaning of 'integration' in a socio-cultural context is the point to which immigrants/minorities integrate into the societal culture of their host country, and view their success related to their participation in the different societal institutions that are based on a common language and define the societal culture of that country.

4. Identificational integration:

Such form of integration is also referred as psychological, and refers to the extent of immigrants feelings of belonging and associating themselves with their host countries. In simple terms, it is an issue whether or not immigrants/minorities regard their host country as 'their country', their loyalties and patriotism lie with their host country, they care about the political events that have effects on their host country, etc. (op. cit.).

2.2 From assimilation to Multiculturalism as form of integration

People, who migrated to the United States, Canada or Australia, before 1960s, in order to be allowed to enter these countries, were expected to drop their individual traditions and customs, and assimilate to the cultural norms of the host countries (Kymlicka, 1997). "Assimilation was seen as essential for political stability, and was further rationalized through ethnocentric denigration of other cultures" (Kymlicka, 1997:63).

But integration policies in form of assimilation showed certain negative effects on immigrants/minorities in form of dilemmas whether they had to get rid or cover up the characteristics of their cultural, social backgrounds and heritage, in order to share the opportunities available in the society that would enable them to achieve the social and material goods they appreciate. Such dilemmas of immigrants/minorities can lead to their identity crisis, particularly if they happen to be from developing countries. The notion that their home countries are looked upon as inferior to the host country in various areas such as low standard of living and the absence of modern industrialized technology can lead to immigrants' crisis of self-esteem. The notion and belief that the ethnical majority views them as inferiors can drive the immigrants/minorities to their self-stigmatization of their self image (Eidheim, 1969).

Therefore, due to constant pressures from minorities, with time authorities of those countries had to drop assimilation as their integration policies in the beginning of the 1970s. They had to adopt new policies that were considered more pluralistic and tolerant. Such policies not only allow, but encourage, as well minorities to retain different aspects of their ethnic traditions and customs. This means that acknowledging and accepting cultural differences became no longer unpatriotic towards the host countries, making it adequate for minorities to preserve their traditions and customs in regards to things such as religion, ways of dressing, diets and recreations, as well as their associations with each other in order to be able to maintain these practices (Kymlicka, 1997).

Kymlicka (1997:63) states that multiculturalism policies emerged as result to the demands of natural extension of the changes stated above. He argues that when host countries accept that minorities should be proud of their ethnicity, it is only adequate for those countries to adapt

public institutions that accommodate immigrants' ethnic identity. Nevertheless, this is hard to achieve in a country like the United States where social wage is absent, and there is a great inequality between individuals because of labor market deregulation. It is easier to adapt such public institutions in a European country like Norway which is a welfare state and the labor market is regulated (Sassen, 2006).

The other reasons why Western countries are becoming more multicultural are globalization, the formations of the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries, as well as different formation of bilateral and multilateral forms of cooperation between countries. Especially due to the acceleration of globalization in recent years, countries inevitably became more and more multicultural, thus the making it necessary for some kind of multiculturalism policies (Sussmuth, 2006).

Multiculturalism policies can be referred to, as policies that the government of a country adopts or proposes at different levels, so that the adjustment of the ethno-cultural identities and practices of immigrant groups would be possible. Such policies can be in form of government legislation at the federal, state or local levels or within different non-governmental, public or private institutions like businesses, schools etc. (op. cit.).

It is Hall's (2000:223-224) opinion that if it is agreed that a society is multi-cultural, that means the existence of more than one (nationality, ethnicity) group in that society is recognized. The problem that Eurocentric assimilationism posed was that the framework of one group, in most cases the ethnic majority, should not be imposed on other ethnic groups. There should be a type of framework (in form of some kind of multiculturalism) that enables to avert, and give the possibility for negotiations regarding serious conflict of outlook of beliefs and interests.

Even within the families of minorities there will have to be readjustment in the relations between all the members of these families, through renegotiations and redefinitions of the patterns of their interrelationships, so that their traditional values and the characteristics of their host country would be taken into account. Putting into perspective that every family of a same minority group is unique in its structure and relationships between the family members within, the forms and the results of the redefinition of every interrelationship also differ (Hall,

2000:221). The implementation of a separate integration policy for every unique family is unrealistic. Nonetheless when drafting any given integration policy, authorities can take into account immigrant/minority individuals' common features that are of importance (as further suggested in this study).

According to Hall (2000), the term multi-cultural in a society, "describes the social characteristics and problems of governance posed by any society in which different cultural communities live together and attempt to build a common life while retaining something of their 'original' identity... Multiculturalism references the strategies and policies adopted to govern or manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multi-cultural societies throw up" (Hall, 2000:209-210).

There are different multi-cultural societies in different countries; consequently there are different multiculturalism policies. It would be wrong to assume that multiculturalism is a clandestine method of endorsing a particularly ideal, fictional, non existing state, or a single policy that characterizes a single political strategy (op. cit.).

"Multiculturalism is too complex a body of ideas and practices to be judged "for" or "against". Rather, one must study it in concrete settings and analyze how it is applied. Multiculturalism can, however, be regarded as a consequence of the idea of pluralism..." (Ellingsen, 2009:2).

According to Hall (2000:210), the different 'multiculturalisms' are:

- Conservative multiculturalism is an assimilation policy of immigrants/minorities into the customs and traditions of the majority.
- Liberal multiculturalism, seeks to integrate people from various culture into values of a universal citizenship of the mainstream. It allows immigrants`/minorities cultural practices to take place in private.
- Pluralist multiculturalism officially enfranchises the differences between groups along cultural lines and accords various group-rights to different communities within a more communal or communitarian political order.
- Commercial multiculturalism, its theory is that with the recognition of the diversity of people with different culture and values in market places, the need for

- redistribution of resources and power will disappear because of the private consumption.
- Corporate multiculturalism can be private or public; it seeks to deal with the cultural differences of immigrants/minorities in the benefit of the centre.
- Critical multiculturalism, or 'revolutionary' as it is also called, "foregrounds power, privilege, the hierarchy of oppressions and the movements of resistance" (McLaren, 1997 cited in Hall, 2000:210). "It seeks to be rebellious, polyvocal, heteroglossial and anti-foundational" (Goldberg, 1994 cited in Hall, 2000:210).

2.3 Criticism of multiculturalism

The idea of multiculturalism is not without its critics, even to this day:

A number of ordinary people and policy makers are against multiculturalism, arguing that the idea of multiculturalism leads to separatism, therefore considered as opposed to integration. Multiculturalism is criticized for evolving towards a broadly separatist course by promoting more and more demands from the constantly increasing in numbers minority groups. Such events are seen as a move away from integration (Kymlicka, 1997).

The opponents of multiculturalism argue some steps leading to separatism and/or sustainable societal culture by the immigrants/minorities have been taken in form of demands such as the possibility of wearing the Hidjab (a head covering scarf traditionally worn by some Muslim women) in schools by the Muslim minorities in France, the attempt by some minorities practicing the religion of Islam to introduce the Hidjab for some willing Muslim policewomen as part of their uniform, some suggestions by certain members of some minority groups for government sponsored schools where the taught subjects would not be in the Norwegian language.

According to Kymlicka (1997:47), ethnic majorities of many Western countries consider government-sponsored multiculturalism policies as encouragements for immigrant groups to consider themselves as national groups. The immigrants are seen as groups that seek the creation and maintaining of societal institutions, in form of economy, education, politics and legally using their mother tongue in order to participate in all those spheres. Consequently, this will make it possible for them to thrive without having to integrate into the societal

institutions set up by the majority of the country, thus such chain of events will inevitably lead to separatism.

Members of the conservative Right in western countries regard multiculturalism as a policy that will cause the loss of the purity and cultural integrity of their nations (Hall, 2000).

Multiculturalism is also criticized by some liberal groups. They argue that it undermines the rule of law, human rights, position of minorities' women and children (e.g. forced marriages), individual freedom of religion, individual liberty, formal equality and personal autonomy because of the cult of the ethnicity and the pursuit of difference that are considered by them as threats to the neutrality and universalism of liberal states (op. cit.).

2.4 In support of multiculturalism

On the other hand, supporters of multiculturalism policies such as Kymlicka (1997) argue to the contrary by stating that "critics of these policies typically focus entirely on the fact that they involve public affirmation and recognition of immigrants' ethnic identity - a process which is said to be inherently separatist. But they ignore the fact that this affirmation and recognition occurs within common institutions...On the contrary, these policies are flatly in contradiction with both ethnic marginalization and ethno-nationalism, since they encourage integration into mainstream institutions" (Kymlicka, 1997:63). In his opinion, in any multicultural society, as long as the so called primary pillars of the government-sponsored integration policies on education, employment and naturalization are intact, there is no risk of immigrant/minority groups leaning towards separatism (Kymlicka, 1997:71).

Kymlycka (1997:56-57) states, that different people supporters and critics alike have different understanding of multiculturalism. Nevertheless, he lines out what he considers nine major affirmative multiculturalism action policies that he considers to have positive effects on integration instead of separatism and/or marginalization:

1. Affirmative action programs that give possibility to immigrants/minorities as well as individuals with disabilities of greater participation in the educational and economic institutions of the host country.

- 2. Revising the history/literature curriculum taught in schools by acknowledging the historical and cultural contributions made by immigrants/minorities to the host country.
- Allowing religious holidays for Immigrants/minorities corresponding to their religion.
 Not imposing on them the weekly working schedule worked out for the mainstream population of the host country.
- 4. revising dress-codes in public places, schools and places of their employment by allowing immigrants/minorities to wear certain clothes they consider fit in relation to their cultures and religion
- 5. Anti-racism educational programs should be provided not only for the ethnic majority, but for the immigrants/minorities as well.
- 6. Codes prohibiting harassment at schools and working places should be implemented as policy.
- 7. Funding by the government of ethnic cultural festivals as well as programs of ethnic studies for immigrants/minorities.
- 8. Some services can be provided to elderly immigrants/minorities and those with difficulties of learning the language of their host country in their mother-tongue.
- 9. Introducing bilingual education programs for children of immigrants/minorities by conducting their early years' education in the language of their host country and the languages of their countries of origin (or parents' countries of origin).

According to him, most of the policies listed above entail the adjustment of the terms of integration of minorities and not encouragement of separatism or rejection of integration as some critics argue (Kymlicka, 1997:58).

Some critics do not agree with suggestions n. 8 and 9 (stated above). In their opinion this can lead toward the prevention and discouragement of immigrants learning the official language of the host country (op. cit.).

But learning the official language of their host country should not be an issue. Because, apart for some exceptions, in order to avoid marginalization and pass such handicap to their children by communicating with them only in their natives languages, immigrants/minorities tend to acquire the official language of their host country (op. cit.).

In addition, Kymlicka (1997:49-50) states that multiculturalism is only a part of larger public policies adopted by countries. That is the reason why immigrants' decisions regarding integration are not affected only by multiculturalism. There are many aspects of governments' public policies and actions in spheres such as education, professional accreditation, work, health, naturalization, etc. that must also be considered.

Acknowledging that some people in the leadership of minority groups do hope that multiculturalism will pave the way to a broad separatist policy, he argues that there is lack of evidence that immigrants living in any of the major countries seek to form themselves into national minorities, to adopt a nationalist political agenda or nation building. But even if they wanted to, immigrants do not have the necessary power and resources to realize such enormous projects. Because, none of these major nine multicultural policies, separately or together, have the capacity or intension to enable immigrants of becoming national minorities with a program of nation building on their agenda (op. cit.).

For example, just because a group of immigrants have few classes taught to their children in their mother-tongue and have ethnic festivals does not mean that they are taking a step towards a societal culture.(op. cit.).

In order for programs leading towards a societal culture to exist on behalf a certain immigrant community (e.g. Ethiopians), among other things, there should be an involvement in creating Amharic-language (Ethiopians` mother tongue) universities, using Amharic language as on of the working languages in the army and governmental work places, there should be a political body in the parliament that represent Ethiopian minorities. This means that in order to get citizenship of their host country, they will not be obliged to learn any other language than their mother tongue. Additionally it involves their right to select and naturalize future immigrants that can be integrated into the Amharic speaking community. Since such political aspiration of ambitious nation building program requires the use and control over different political institutions, the idea that immigrants have the capacity of achieving such a monumental task is Utopia (op. cit.).

Some critics of multiculturalism seem to have a valid point when they argue that it promotes mental separatism of immigrants/minorities. They argues that immigrants/minorities might

participate in the society of their host country just because they know that is what they must do in order to lead what is considered a standard life in that country. But it does not necessarily mean that such form of institutional integration will lead them to physiological integration as well. There is always a possibility that the immigrants/minorities might focus mentally and practically on their countries they left behind, instead of moving on with their lives by associating themselves with their host country and its society (op. cit.).

As an answer to such critics, Kymlicka (1997:69) points out that institutional integration of immigrants/minorities eventually will lead to psychological integration with time. He argues that with the existence of different ethnic groups in a society, interaction on many levels by members of these groups is inevitable because of common institutions. Such interactions lead to inter-ethnic friendships, marriages, etc. leading these individuals towards common interests and goals that focus on their future in the host country. That means that these individuals start relating and caring for their host country by sharing and focusing on the events within.

Kymlicka (1997:70) states as well that there are documented facts of immigrants being very patriotic to their host country. According to him there are two explanations for such outcome:

- Contrary to the situation in the countries they came from, immigrants from underdeveloped countries, refugees in particular are grateful for the possibility to enjoy the fruits of democracy of western countries such as freedom, individual rights, security, and economical prosperity.
- 2. By expressing their patriotism to their host country, immigrants put at ease the fears from the ethnic majority, when the question of loyalty to that country arises.

But even where there are cases of institutional integration of immigrants without their psychological integration into the society and institutions of the host country, the government should come up with programs that would encourage and enable immigrants to focus and relate to the society they live in instead of on their past and their countries of origin (op. cit.). It can be said the support as well as the critic of multiculturalism will continue in the future. Nevertheless, Wallace (1994) has put the perspective of multiculturalism in the following terms:

"Everybody knows... that multiculturalism is not the Promised Land... [However] even at its most cynical and pragmatic, there is something about multiculturalism which continues to be worth pursuing... we do need to find ways of publicly manifesting the significance of cultural diversity, [and] of integrating the contributions of people of color into the fabric of society" (Wallace, 1994. cited in Hall, 2000:211). Considering that presently it is the year 2010, substituting the words 'colored people' with 'minorities' (especially those from developing countries) would be more adequate.

Apart from the issue of integration, there are concerns about the issue of the relation of multiculturalism and individual human rights. It is a fact that cultures of some minority groups allow things such as the physical and/or abuse by the husband towards his wife, the circumcision of young girls, etc. The question is being raised not because such so-called cultural behaviors within some minority groups affect their societal integration in their host country, but because they are considered to be violations of individual human rights (Kymlicka, 1997).

Therefore in order to avoid the violation of individual human rights of any member of immigrant/minority groups, it is a necessity for states that are considered liberal to impose two strict limits when implementing multiculturalism policies. No kind multiculturalism policy should allow the inequality between groups (e.g. the apartheid era in South Africa) and the lack of freedom in form of basic civil and political rights of individuals within the minority group (op. cit.).

As stated above, there are different kinds of national multiculturalism policies leading to different forms of integration of immigrants/minorities planned by authorities of different countries. Therefore, the forms of integration of immigrants/minorities vary from country to country, so does the relationship between the "social order" and the "sense of nationhood". Despite the growing arguments in favor of multiculturalism policies some countries still use the assimilation policy as form of integration and one of such countries is France. Even historically, like any other nation France was built through assimilation of populations from different regions (Hekmann, 2004).

On the other hand, new versions of racism are gaining ground around the world. There is growing backlash against immigrants/minorities form ethnic majorities of western countries because of their governments' multiculturalism policies, the immigrants/minorities are perceived as not integrating (Kymlicka, 1997). Such a response of the ethnic majority of western countries towards multiculturalism is due to confusion and makes it problematic by opening path to the revival of the old biological stereotypes, with a new exclusionary, racist theme of 'cultural differences' (Hall, 2000).

There is no need to Deny the actual fact, that ethnic majorities of Western countries tend to make a distinction between the immigrants from other parts of the western world and East Europe and the non-white immigrants from underdeveloped countries (or referred to as 'U-landet' in the Norwegian society) (op. cit.).

There is also a tendency to put together in the same pot all immigrants from underdeveloped countries or by the continents they come from (e.g. Immigrants from the African continent are seen as a single group). Such views are misguided and wrong, because the immigrants from underdeveloped countries belong to different nationalities from various countries, with differences in ethnicity, culture, religion, language, background, heritage, etc. The reality that each immigrant, no matter where he/she comes from, has his/her own individuality in forms of world views political philosophies academic aspirations, etc. should always be acknowledged (op. cit.).

The differentiating, labeling and stigmatization of immigrants/minorities from underdeveloped countries show the existence of racism on behalf of ethnic majorities of the western countries. The term 'race' itself is politically and socially constructed, giving means for a construction of a system of socio-economic power, exploitation and exclusion of groups of people.

Hall (2000:222-223) argues that the logic of racism is that genetic and biological differences are the causes for social and cultural differences. It can also be referred to as biological racism, and it favor features such as skin color in addition of being used for pointing out social and cultural differences. For example 'black' is associated with people mostly from Africa, who are considered to be very close to nature. Consequently, they are considered not

only humans of inferior intellect, but also susceptible to violence, without any kind of self-control, lazy; who, rather than being driven by reason, are driven by feelings and emotions.

Gullestad (2006:222) refers to such ideologies and views as 'scientific racism', that can be characterized as forms of ideology in which human races are defined as permanent physical differences, with a direct association between physical attributes and qualities such as morality and intelligence. This implies that together the 'races' constitute a hierarchy, with 'the superior white race' at the apex and the other races in inferior positions.

On the other hand, there is existence of labeling and stigmatization by 'ethnicity'. 'Ethnicity' is supposed to refer to the differences in culture and religion among groups of people. Nevertheless, though indirectly, the biological referent is still present in the discourse of ethnicity. Because when a certain group of minorities is labeled and stigmatized as being inferior on the grounds of cultural differences, the pointing out of the physical differences occurs simultaneously (Hall, 2000).

Therefore, the so-called 'biological racism' and 'cultural differentialism' should be regarded as the two registers of racism and not two separate systems, and can be referred to as racism's two logics, because "in most situations, the discourses of biological and cultural differences are simultaneously in play" (Hall, 2000:223).

There are also opinions, that the acquirement of education and formal qualifications would enable immigrants/minorities to become self-sufficient and have wide choices of work in the labor market, which in turn will give them the means and possibility to interact more with members of the ethnic majority of the country they live in. The possibility of such greater visibility and social mobility gained due to their education would show them in a new light in the eyes of the ethnic majority, which in turn will have more understanding and respect towards these immigrants/minorities as individuals, as well as their differences in culture, ethnicity, background, heritage and religion. (Djuve and Hagen, 1995).

When immigrants/minorities acquire education, that can potentially reduce, what Gordon (1964:235-239) refers to as 'structural separation'. He argues that, if there is equal-status in form of education and professionalism between immigrants/minorities and the ethnic majority

the prejudice is bound to be reduced to the minimum. In contrast, immigrants with limited education who are active in the 'manual labor' sector of the host country can be regarded as structurally separated, in the sense that their contacts with the ethnic majority are limited to 'secondary' contacts, at their places of employment, on the civic scene and other commonly 'impersonal' contacts. The lack of social interaction between such immigrants/minorities and the ethnic majority is caused by structural separation, frequently, it results in hostile attitudes which are subsequently translated into ethnical difference.

The reduction of structural separation with the acquirement of education does not always guarantee positive outcomes when it comes to integration and acceptance of minorities (Djuve and Hagen, 1995). Furthermore, according to Helleland and Hansen (2008:78), even the western educational systems are not exempt from the labeling and stigmatization of immigrants/minorities in some occasions. Referring to linguistic minority students and their teacher-student relationship, they state that it can be affected if the teacher does not focus on the student as a person and focuses on his/her culture and background instead, it would diminish the teacher's ability of accepting and respecting the student's professional judgments and capabilities.

Stereotyping of immigrant/minority students sometimes occurs when it comes to the question of expressing disagreement on certain issues. If a student that belongs to the ethnic majority of a country expresses a different opinion or doubt on an issue, his/her behavior and actions are psychologically explained. But when the same behavior by an immigrant student occurs, his/her actions will be attributed to his/her culture which is different from the cultures of western countries (op. cit.).

There is no doubt that such kind of behavior and attitude towards linguistic minority students by teachers as well as other students lead to the students' insecurities. They consider themselves stigmatized, marginalized and excluded, subsequently become afraid, feel stupid and unworthy of the educational institution. Mostly not being able to get understanding and some form of assistance from their educational establishment, these linguistic minority students are driven to discouragement and self-alienation or into alienation as a separate linguistic minority group (Jonsmoen and Geek. 2008:97-98).

Steps must be taken in order to put end to such situations, because in a society that considers itself multicultural, the fact that different individuals belong to different cultures, and that all cultures have their own values, thereby, each merit their place in the educational system of that society must be acknowledged and implemented as a policy. Otherwise, the ethnic majority of any given society will continue to be unwilling in giving up its cultural and economic dominance (Eriksen, 2009:289).

Jonsmoen and Greek (2008:98) offer two suggestions on how to resolve the issues the situation of linguistic minorities in western countries educational institutions:

- 1. With more help from the educational administration, linguistic minority students will be able to fit in and adjust to the educational institution of the host country
- 2. Educational establishments will have to adjust their curriculum so that they would be more fitting of a multi-cultural society

In general, if it is the intension of a western country to eradicate mono-cultural and stereotype attitudes, and minimize the labeling and stigmatization of immigrants/minorities, it should implement more educational programs that would increase the curiosity, imagination and critical thoughts of members of the ethnic majority (Helleland and Hansen, 2008).

Unfortunately, even up-to-date, there are still individuals within ethnic majorities of Western countries who are not absolved from the misguided views concerning immigrants from developing countries and vice versa. Policy makers in most of these countries have tried to rectify these situations by implementing integration policies that differed with time, political and economical, internal and/or external situations.

2.5 Models of integration policies of some European countries

As I have mentioned, different countries have different integration policies for immigrant/minorities and brief look at some European counties and their current integration policies reveals that:

The French nation which was historically built through the assimilating of various populations from different regions still has an integration policy in form of 'assimilation'. The so-called "integration a la Francaise" aims towards maintaining a culturally homogeneous nation by culturally unifying and assimilating the different cultures of immigrants/minorities with those of the Ethnic majority. Immigrants/minorities are transformed into French citizens by acquiring the right of participation in the political life which enables them to become "a community of citizens" (Hekmann, 2004). This means that immigrants' full citizenship is essential for their integration (Duke et al., 1999). The absence of a concrete integration policy in France is based on their logic that the best instruments to integrate immigrants are the legislation and the typical French educational system (Hekmann, 2004).

Countries such as Great-Britain have adopted a form of multiculturalism policies, where the cultural differences of immigrants/minorities accepted and tolerated, and their ethnic identities acknowledged. Immigrant/minority groups are free to implement their cultures in daily life basis, as long as it is within the boundaries of the national and international laws (op. cit.). But events such as the riots in Northern England and Muslim fundamentalism among some members of minorities (Home Office, 2001b; Cantle, 2005; McGhee, 2005; Institute of Community Cohesion, 2006) ignited debates whether multiculturalism is an adequate integration policy for Great-Britain (Kelly, 2002; Momood, 2005). In Netherlands where every member of the society, regardless their ethnicity, culture, religion has equal right of access to the country's resources, special programs are put in place as a policy, in order to help immigrants/minorities and people with handicap adjust to the society they live in (Hekmann, 2004).

There is also the orientation of social policy towards immigrants applied in Germany, where until recently there was a sort of denial of the issue of immigrants. Such policy gives immigrants the possibility to have access important institutions such as education, work, housing, etc. It also includes them in the social policy system and general welfare state (op. cit.). When it comes to immigrants' possibilities of getting citizenship as part of integration; unlike France and United Kingdom that have 'pluralistic political inclusion' models of citizenship (Faist, 1995), Germany being a country where citizenship is automatically granted only to those with ethnic German blood ties (ius sanguinis) (Duke et al., 1999) can be referred to having 'ethno-cultural political exclusion' model of citizenship (Faith, 1995). According to

Ager and Strang (2008:174), the later model of citizenship drives immigrants towards assimilation as form of integration.

The integration policies of countries such as Finland and Spain focus mostly on giving access to immigrants to education and the labor markets, because of the existing problem of immigrants' unemployment, especially of those from underdeveloped countries (Hekmann, 2004).

Unlike other European countries where integration policies are mainly promoted, by national non-governmental organizations, In Sweden, the public sector which administrates the general welfare policy is responsible for promoting such integration policies (op. cit.).

2.6 The Norwegian integration policy

Norway is a 'welfare-state', where the government is the primary responsible for the welfare of its citizens as in matters of education, employment, health care and social security. In contrast to many societies of other countries (especially developing countries) where such similar governmental services are absent, thus making the culture of communal belonging and attachment and dependence strong, the Norwegian society is based on individualism and focuses on independence, autonomy, individual initiative. That means, compared to the societies of mostly developing countries, where traditionally strong communal ties exist (in forms of ties between extended families, relatives, neighbors and the local community), ties within the Norwegian society between people are considered quite loose and every person is expected only to look after his/her or their immediate family's interests (Helleland and Hansen, 2008).

Prior to the 1980s the Norwegian society was regarded as a homogenous and egalitarian. "The central value concept is 'likhet', meaning 'likeness', 'similarity', 'identity' or 'sameness'. Likhet is the most common translation of 'equality', implying that social actors must consider themselves as more-or-less the same in order to feel of equal value" (Gullestad, 2006:170). The constantly increasing number of non-white immigrants from developing countries with evident cultural diversity starting the 1980s led to the acknowledgement by Norwegian authorities that Norway has become a multicultural nation. With growing numbers of immigrants, concerns and debates and controversies on the issue of migration among the

Norwegian public and politicians grew as well. Consequently, the "restriction and control of migrants" policy was introduced starting 1975. Nevertheless, immigrants, particularly refugees and asylum seekers still found ways to enter the country, still raising discontent and debates among some members of the Ethnic Norwegian society. By capitalizing on people's feelings towards immigrants, politicians turned it into a political profit for elections (Hagelund, 2002).

In the 1980s the notion integration was introduced in the Norwegian politics; it referred to ideas how the country should function and move forward with its multi-cultural society (op. cit.).

Until the 1980s the integration policy of Norway adopted a form of voluntary assimilation. Immigrants/minorities could voluntarily put behind and ignore their cultures, backgrounds, heritage, etc. and unilaterally adapt to the ways and values of the Ethnic majority of the Norwegian society (op. cit.).

In 1980 policy makers concluded that assimilation does not work for Multicultural Norway. It was understood that immigrants had to adapt to the ways of life of the ethnic majority of the Norwegian society, and be allowed to keep some of their culture, traditions, heritage, etc. At the same time it became clear that in order for all to coexist as equals in the society, the ethnic Norwegian majority had to accept and tolerate some of their differences (in culture, tradition, etc.) with immigrants/minorities. But what is the solution of how to achieve a perfect harmony? As policy makers of Norway and other western countries realized over the years, there is no concrete formula that would lead to an ideal society (op. cit.).

Subsequently, that is why in 1988 they made some changes in the Norwegian integration policy, by introducing the notion of respect for immigrant/minorities' cultures and languages, never the less pointing out that their rights to be different were limited. Following this policy, immigrants were still expected to stay in the framework of the Norwegian society by learning the Norwegian language and the history of the Norwegian society among other things. (op. cit.).

Although Norway was mostly viewed and referred to as a monocultural country, it can be fair to say that in reality multiculturalism existed in this country prior to the 1980s. Since culture refers to a certain way of life of a given group of people, one can not deny that the Sámi people in the northern parts of Norway do not live in an identical manner as the rest of ethnic Norwegians, or that the lives of the Norwegian fishermen living on shores in the North differs from the lives of the Norwegian farmers living inland in the south. Currently there seem to be an understanding and agreement that the Norwegian society is even more multicultural than before; therefore there should be available conditions where diversity is allowed within some kind of framework and on the basis of certain common and essential values. The current integration policy of Norway is based on equality and formulates that immigrants/minorities have individual rights; have duties of participation in certain structural and social spheres; have the right to live in this country according to some aspects of their cultures, as long as they are not contradiction with individual rights, the Norwegian law and the right to equal opportunities regardless ones `ethnicity, culture religion, gender, etc. (op. cit.).

According to such policy, immigrants have the duty as well as the right to study Norwegian language (250 hours minimum) and the history of the Norwegian society (50 hours) in order for them to be able to become permanent residents and (if it is their wish) citizens of Norway at a certain period of time (IMDi, 2008).

Only those immigrants who came to this country as refugees in accordance with the United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) international resettlement programs, as well as immigrants who entered the country as asylum seekers on their own and got refugee statuses are entitled to the so called "introduction program" if they wish. This means that for a period ranging from two to thee years, with constant monthly financial support (around 9,500NOK per month after taxes), these individuals have the possibility to learn Norwegian language up to a level that would enable them attend any Norwegian college or university. They can also study and graduate high school by attending normal schools or adult education centers "Voksen Opplæring". Some of these people, after attending Norwegian language classes choose to take practical courses lasting from six months up to one year or a bit longer, and then enter the Norwegian labor market. There are those few who for different reasons refuse the services of the "introduction program" preferring to shape their lives without such assistance (op. cit.).

Such form of integration primarily focuses on immigrant/minorities participation in common structural and social spheres and their abilities to learn Norwegian language and consequently work. In general terms, immigrants/minorities are expected to become structurally integrated and self-sufficient. Such integration policy shows that the policy makers focus on how to create new equalities, rather than coming up with ideas on how ethnic Norwegians and immigrants can live together with some differences (Hagelund, 2002).

Until recently immigrant groups were rarely referred to as minority groups giving a false sense of feeling that these groups were not here to stay on permanent basis. And like in other western countries, there is a tendency to lump all immigrants together instead of viewing minorities in a plural and diversified context (Djuve and Hagen, 1995).

There is a kind of differentiation by the ethnic Norwegian majority as in "us and them". Such socially constructed distinctions mostly target immigrants/minorities from underdeveloped countries. It is an existing form of racism in this country which is constructed in a form of labeling, marginalizing and alienating (op. cit.).

It is understandable that the Norwegian policy makers, with the help of the integration policy, can not push ethnic Norwegians to interact with immigrants/minorities, such actions should be voluntary. Nevertheless, educational and recreational programs can be introduced by the government in order to try changing the negative views that some people within the ethnic Norwegian majority have towards immigrants/minorities, as well as tackling the limited interaction between individuals of various ethnicities and cultures (op. cit.).

Another issue that makes the Norwegian integration policy malfunction, is that one of the bases of the Norwegian integration policy is the right to equal treatment and opportunities for every body regardless their ethnicity, gender, age, culture, religion, etc. No matter how well intended it seems on the surface, such policy is not producing the needed results. The reason for that is primarily because the equal right of access to education and the labor market which is the main principle of equality among people in the welfare-state was a model originally developed by Norwegian policy makers for ethnic Norwegians, based on their common culture, values and living conditions. (op. cit.).

Djuve and Hagen (1995, Fafo-rapport: 184) state that when introducing immigrants/minorities into this policy of equal rights and equality overall, many facts have not been taken into account by Norwegian policy makers:

- The fact that immigrants/minorities do not have the same starting conditions as Ethnic Norwegians in forms of language, social networks, living conditions, adjusting to a new country and its ethnic people, etc. Particularly, immigrants who come to Norway as asylum seekers are more vulnerable and disadvantaged, because of a possibility of them having baggage in form of some kind of trauma from their past.
- Due to the unspoken, socially discriminating attitude among ethnic Norwegians, immigrants/minorities have fewer opportunities when the question of employment compared to their ethnic Norwegian counterparts, even though they might have equal education.

"Equality of opportunity is not the same as equality of distribution. It is 'uneconomic' and "brain wastage ... to educate any member of society for an environment that does not encourage full use of his or her skills ..." (Poskitt, 1998 cited in Rønning, 2001:15). It is unfortunate that the diversity of skills which an equal gender distribution would bring to the work force is often overlooked" (Rønning, 2001:15).

• It is agreed upon that individuals from different, nationalities, ethnic groups, cultures, have different ways of adapting to a new society, and the time needed for that varies as well. Even individuals of same nationalities or groups adapt differently and with individual pace. Unfortunately, by pointing out immigrants' differences in adaptation some individuals use this to strengthen the existing racist inclinations in the atmosphere of the Norwegian society which is among other things, in forms of labeling and stigmatization. There are cases when some Norwegian municipalities and districts show preferences among nationalities and ethnic groups during the settlement of immigrants/minorities. Basically, the logic is that some nationalities or ethnic groups are considered to be better workers than others. The primary focuses of these municipalities and districts are for these immigrants/minorities to become financially self-sufficient and not bother them. This shows that in reality the value of immigrants as an individual is partially degraded to mere financial profit logic (Djuve and Hagen, 1995, Fafo-rapport: 184).

In light of some of the facts mentioned above, it can be considered that the same treatment and equality for everyone policy, which is the main core of the overall current integration policy of Norway is not working, thus, the policy makers must come up with a different minority policy, the main goal of which will be compensating disadvantages of immigrants/minorities over ethnic Norwegians. With the existence of such policy immigrants/minorities will get the chance to have access to equal rights not only theoretically but practically as well (op. cit.). Unless such steps are taken, these immigrants/minorities will continue to have the feeling and notion that the society of ethnic Norwegian majority stigmatizes and attaches ethnic labels to them as individuals, their families and their communities (Eidheim, 1969:40).

Agreeing that the model of integration policy implemented by Norwegian policy makers is not without its flaws, Gutmann (1994) argues that "it is hard to find a democratic or democratizing society these days that is not the sight of some significant controversy over whether and how its public institutions should better recognize the identities of cultural and disadvantaged minorities. What does it mean for citizens with different cultural identities, often based on ethnicity, race, gender or religion, to recognize ourselves as equals.......Apart from ceding each of us the same rights as all other citizens, what does respecting people as equals entail?.....We need to ask more about the requirements of treating people as free and equal citizens" (Gutmann, 1994: 3-5).

As a solution, Vasta (2009) suggests that "the principle of equality and full participation requires more than introducing anti-discriminatory laws, there is a need to introduce new structural strategies and practices that deal with long-term inequality in the labor market and education that continues into the second generation. 'Equality' means equality of access and outcomes" (Vasta, 2009:31). Hall (2000) points out that: "...we must look for how both the greater recognition of difference and greater equality and justice for all can become part of a common horizon" (Hall, 2000:237).

3. Research design and method

This chapter is an account of chosen research design and method, as well as the reason for such choices. It will also describe the steps taken by me in order to carry out data collection and analysis during the study.

3.1 Chosen method for data collection

During the study, a qualitative research method that has an inductive approach was used in order to understand and answer the questions 'how' and 'why' things are the way they are. "Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. As a research strategy it is inductivist, constructionist, and interpretivist...Most obviously, qualitative research tends to be concerned with words rather than numbers...The stress is on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of the world by its participants..." (Bryman, 2008:366).

The qualitative research method gives the researcher the possibility to interpret people's behaviors in terms of culture, values, norms, etc. within a group or community (op. cit.). In this study, it means that the researcher is able to find out what people think and how they behave by interviewing them.

The 'snowball sampling' approach was used as a data collection technique; in doing so, 18 Ethiopian immigrant women were interviewed individually in Oslo. They were contacted through mutual acquaintances and through the Ethiopian community, which is a social and cultural organization that is legally registered with the Norwegian authorities.

The prime method of collecting qualitative data consisted of:

 Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with individual Ethiopian immigrant women, on one-on-one basis. This method of data collection allowed me to focus on the informants' experiences as well as their thoughts. During the interviews equal attention was given to the vast range of differences in their age, religious, educational and social backgrounds and their reasons for migrating to Norway.

2. Literature, documents and transcripts analysis.

3.2 Interview guide

I started by following basic elements in the preparation of my interview guide (create order on the topic areas; formulate the interview questions, etc.). The interview guide was formulated based on sociological theories on integration of immigrants/minorities, assimilation, multiculturalism, and perspectives related to my personal experiences and observations, as well as previous studies.

Though there an interview guide was used, the interviewees were given the flexibility in how they chose to reply therefore, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the study subjects as data collection method. Such form of interviewing method gives freedom to both the interviewee and interviewer.

In this study, I refrained from interviewing the informants using the method of conducting a focus group discussion, because, while those ethnic Norwegian or the Ethiopian men living in Norway whom are married to the Ethiopian women might not have much influence on the answers that will be given by these women, nevertheless, when/if the women meet in a group among themselves, their answers to my questions might be shaped by the group instead on the basis of their own individual experiences. This can be due to the fact that they would not want to feel different (or one can even say alienated) from the majority of the interviewees of the group. That means there is a big possibility whichever way the majority of the informants would choose to answer would be agreed with, even by some of the individuals, who actually think otherwise. As Asch (1951)'s experiments showed, "an emerging group view may mean that a perfectly legitimate perspective held just by one individual may be suppressed" (Asch, 1951 cited in Bryman, 2008:489). In addition, according to Janis (1982), "there is also evidence that, as a group comes to share a certain point of view, group members come to think uncritically about it and to develop almost irrational attachments to it" (Janis, 1982 cited in Bryman, 2008:489).

The questions were formulated in a language, comprehensive to the interviewees and others; leading questions were avoided as much as possible. By using such method, my aim was to find out:

- 1. What effects the Norwegian integration policy has on the daily lives of the Ethiopian immigrant women.
 - Where do these women find themselves structural integration wise in the Norwegian labor market?
 - Where do these women find themselves social integration wise within the Norwegian society (whom do they socially interact with)?
- 2. What do the Ethiopian immigrant women understand by integration?
 - What is these women's understanding of the Norwegian integration policy?
 - Where do these women find themselves cultural integration wise in the Norwegian society (which daily-basis behavior do they prefer and adapt)?
 - Did the Norwegian governments` integration policies allow these women shape their lives and views as they have wanted and hoped for?
 - What effects does the Norwegian government's integration policy have on these women's psychological integration?

3.3 A brief description of the study area

The study was conducted in Oslo, the capital city of Norway. According to Statistics Norway (SSB), for the period of January 2009, Oslo encompasses 426, 9 km² with 575, 475 inhabitants of which 115,670 are immigrants. My reason for selecting Oslo as the study area of my research is due to the fact that it is the largest city with the highest number of immigrants, including the highest number of Ethiopian immigrant women in Norway (SSB, 2009).

Unlike in other small towns as well as big towns of Norway, Oslo is on its way of becoming a melting pot where one can really look to the full at the effects the Norwegian integration policy has on the lives of Ethiopian immigrant women. In smaller towns where there is usually limited (or lack of) work opportunities, lack of colleges and universities, etc. calls for

a different evaluation of the integration policy's effects on immigrants/minorities. Immigrants living in such areas might not be able to achieve what the framework of the integration policy allows them to just because of the fact that the infrastructures for such opportunities are not present in such towns.

3.4 Data collection process

The 18 informants (Ethiopian immigrant women) whom I interviewed are representatives of different age groups; different religious, educational, social and economic backgrounds and heritage (see table 1. Brief overview of the informants).

Although the official language of my study area is Norwegian, in order to avoid bias and misunderstanding during data collection and analysis in terms of language, I conducted the study in English and Amharic (the official language in Ethiopia).

I conducted individual, in depth interviews with the subjects of study for data collection, because such method is close to the reality on the ground. In the process of data collection, with the consent of the interviewees, I recorded my questions and their answers during each interview with the help of a tape recorder. The time length of each interview varied. The shortest interview was conducted in the amount of time of one hour and three minutes; the longest interview was conducted in the amount of time of three hours and six minutes. In total, the gathered data consisted of over thirty seven hours of recording.

During the period of data collection, I tried my best to fit into the category of a qualified interviewer by adopting Kvale (1996:148-149)'s ten qualification criteria for an interviewer, which entail being knowledgeable, structuring, clear, gentle, sensitive, open, steering, critical, remembering and interpreting.

During the entire period of my research, I did my best to relate to the different point of views emerging from the informants. Because, as Bryman (2008) pointed out: "many qualitative researchers express a commitment to viewing events and the social world through the eyes of the people that they study. The social world must be interpreted from the perspective of the

people being studied, rather than as though those subjects were incapable of their own reflections on the social world" (Bryman, 2008:385).

3.5 Transcribing and data analysis

I used grounded theory approach for the analysis of gathered data. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), the definition of grounded theory is, "a theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process. In this method, data collection, analysis and eventual theory stand in close relationship to one another" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:12).

The transcription of the recorded data that was gathered during the interviews was carried out immediately after the data collection. It was a demanding process due to the fact that there was over thirty seven hours of recorded interviews. Since during the data gathering processes the interviews were conducted in Amharic (the official language in Ethiopia), additional time and effort was used to translate the necessary findings to English. The transcribing process served me as instrument for identifying repetitive key words and concepts. Subsequently it made it possible for me to divide the transcribed data by certain themes. When analyzing the transcribed data, the frequency with which those themes occurred served as catalyst to point out the main issues.

3.6 Ethical considerations

During my research, ethical issues have been raised at different stages. "Ethical issues cannot be ignored as they relate directly to the integrity of a piece of a research and of the disciplines that are involved" (Bryman, 2008:113).

First and foremost, I got informed consent of the informants. "The British sociological Association (BSA) States: "As far as possible participation in sociological research should be based on the freely given informed consent of those studies. This implies a responsibility on the sociologist to explain as fully as possible, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research is about, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken, and how it is to be promoted" (Bryman, 2008:121).

When questions regarding confidentiality during the data collection or publication of my findings were raised, I promised do my best to uphold the confidentiality and anonymity of my informants. Although the chosen study area is Norway, where human rights and liberty are considered to be highly respected and protected, there can still be harmful consequences for the study subjects. Any research that can harm participants is unacceptable. According to Diener and Crandall (1978:17), the meaning of 'harm' can have different features. Research participants can sustain physical harm, harm to their development, Loss of self-esteem, stress and be induced to perform reprehensible acts.

During the entire process of data collection, I made the outmost effort to be professional, remain open minded and unbiased to things like: age, ethnicity, religion, education, social/domestic/economic status, etc.

In addition, during my research and publication:

- I have accepted no payment of any kind or favor from or on behalf of the informants or other persons of concern.
- I did, to the best of my abilities, provide accurate and complete information of my research findings.
- I remained a neutral and non-judgmental.
- I refrained from engaging in advocacy on behalf of any party related directly or indirectly to my study.
- I undertook not to publish any material or information about the Ethiopian Immigrant women unless I get appropriate authorization from them.

3.7 Research Challenges

One of the first and foremost obstacles encountered throughout my study was during the process of data collection. The difficulty was in finding and convincing enough number of Ethiopian immigrant women who would be willing to become informants for my research project. More than 75 individuals were approached in total. Forty of the approached immigrant women categorically refused even to listen what the topic of the research project was about. Around 10 of the seventy five women wanted a week or two to read my research questions and decide whether they would want to act as informants for the study. After two

weeks all ten of these women declined to participate, half of them informed me about their decision after I called them by phone, the other half just did not bother to answer my telephone calls at all.

After having consented to all the details regarding the study, thirty of the seventy five immigrant women agreed to be my informants. Then, eight of these women after setting and resetting appointment dates for a period of over one month decided that they would stop answering my repeated and constant phone calls. As some of them put it afterwards, they did not want to offend me by declining my requests to interview them. Instead they found it more correct and acceptable to give me false hopes and waste my time; such is one of the paradoxes of the Ethiopian culture. At this point, I almost dropped everything and was about to look for another thesis topic that does not involve Ethiopians and people I happen to be acquainted with. But after reflecting on the behaviour of some of these Ethiopian immigrant women, I got convinced that the topic I chose regarding their lives within the framework of the Norwegian integration policy would be of much interest.

The data from four informants was unusable, because though they agreed to be interviewed, for some reasons I can only speculate on, they were not willing to give me any information whatsoever no matter what I tried this struck me as very strange behaviours on their part, because I was socially acquainted with some of these informants. There was even an incident that happened with one of these informants; unable or unwilling to get any kind of response to my questions, I decide to ask the informant why she agreed to come and be interviewed? Her answer was that because she had no other plans for the day, it was an opportunity for her to get out of the house and socialise.

I am an Ethiopian immigrant who has been living in Norway for some years; therefore I have my own experiences, views and opinions regarding this country, its society and its integration policy. Because of that, sometimes I could not help the feeling a sense of 'Deja vue' when listening to some answers from the informants regarding their lives. As consequence, I had to proceed during all the stages of the research project with extreme carefulness not to involve my personal (positive and/or negative) views.

I was able to collect and use the data I regarded as adequate for the success of further conduct and completion of the research from eighteen informants. During my interviews with some of those informants, I often had to restrain myself from asking leading questions when the

informants failed to understand my questions and/or had hard time expressing (especially) their thoughts and views.

The fact that I was from the same country as all of the informants and socially was acquainted with some of them had its advantages during the process of my data collection. In contrast to that those factors had also shortcomings at certain times due to the fact that some of the informants were not comfortable in truthfully answering certain questions because it was particularly 'I' who was asking those questions.

Overall, the data collection process has been an educational experience for me. I would like to confess, that first and foremost, during the period and process of data collection my patience towards other people was tested to the extreme limits. After my experience of data collection, once more, I got confirmation that occasionally we humans can be too selfish and careless.

3.8 Validity, reliability and generalisation

In order for the study to have as much validity as possible, the interview questions and the interview guide were made as specific as possible so that the informants could answer. In addition a tape recorder was used during the data gathering process for the accuracy and reliability of the study. Although this study looks into certain specific issue related to the lives of immigrants (from developing countries) within the Norwegian society, it has no claims of generalisation, because of its a small scale and is specifically aimed at women from a given developing country, with a limited number of informants, as well as the delimitation of the study area.

4. Research findings and analysis

In this chapter I present a brief overview of the informants, followed by their experiences, views and opinions regarding the method of teaching Norwegian language to foreigners, higher education, labour market and social integration, each followed by a summary. The section regarding the labour market consists of sub-sections of informants with different reasons for grievances and those with positive attitudes towards the Norwegian labour market.

The section regarding social integration consists of effects of different causes of migration on social integration during the informants' settlement period; effects of different forms of structural integration on social integration, where I will look at informants with high school (or less) level of education and those with above high school level of education from a Norwegian educational system; effects of other factors on social integration, where the role of religion, parenthood and different networks will be looked at.

4.1 A brief overview of the informants

As shown in Table 1 (Brief overview of the informants), the age of the informants ranges from twenty three years to forty nine years. Amongst which there are twelve Coptic Orthodox Christians, two Muslims, One Buddhist, one Pentecost Christian, one Catholic and one Born again Christian.

Two of the informants, for reasons they did not wish to disclose, have converted from the religion of Orthodox Christianity that they and their families traditionally followed, to the religion of Buddhism and born again Christianity even before migrating to Norway.

Looking at the informants' level of education while residing on their home country, it was revealed that at the time of the interviews:

- Two individuals had not completed elementary school, due to the fact that one was still and active student and the other decide to become a farmer following in the footsteps of her parents before both of them migrated to Norway as refugees.
- Six individuals were still in the process of studying in high school before migrating to Norway.
- Five individuals had graduated high school and were active within the Ethiopian labour market before they migrated to Norway.

Five individuals, after graduating high school pursued higher education, among which
one individual was still in the process of studying, two people studied one year and
getting their diplomas, and the other two, graduated at the Bachelor Degree level.
Except for one, the other four individuals were active within the Ethiopian Labour
market before they migrated to Norway and their work was related to their education.

All eighteen informants have different background, as well as different reasons and experiences of migration to Norway, of whom, twelve individuals were forced to flee their home country (Ethiopia) and migrate to Norway as asylum seekers and were granted refugee statuses by the Norwegian authorities after certain period of time, one person came to this country as a result of family reunion and four people came to this country as result of marriage (one married to an Ethnic Norwegian man, three married to Ethiopian men permanently residing in this country or have Norwegian citizenship).

The informants' length of stay in Norway varies from six years up to twenty six years. Theoretically, such length of time gives them the opportunity and the possibility to get acquainted with the Norwegian society, culture, laws, etc. Theoretically, such length of stay in this country gives enough time for the informants to shape their lives in one form or another within the Norwegian society. And the minimum living period of six years should be enough for any of the informants to make up their minds regarding the ethnic Norwegian Majority as well.

During their period of stay in Norway, the informants were able to acquire further education within the Norwegian educational system in some form or another. While the lowest level acquired education is the eighth grade, the highest is PhD studies and research program.

All the informants held different number of jobs over the period of their stay in Norway. The least number of jobs held by one of these informants is one, and the highest is nine. These numbers vary due to factors within the personal life of each individual.

Currently, except for two of the informants, all the rest are active within the Norwegian labour market.

• Nine individuals have work that is related to their education.

- Three individuals (those who do not have higher education or some kind of speciality) work in the so-called 'physical labour' sector.
- One individual who has higher education from a Norwegian college, decided to follow the path of self-employment, not wanting to work within the field of her education.
- Three individuals decided to further their studies. One of them is currently a PhD student, the other one is working on her Masters thesis. The third informant is in the last year of studies within a Bachelor program and has the intention to study further.
- One individual who had a job related to her speciality is currently on maternity leave.
 She is planning to rejoin the Norwegian labour market as soon as possible.
- One individual (due to family related reason) is currently jobless.

The civil statuses of the informants are also diverse:

- Four individuals are single; one of them has one child.
- Seven individuals are married to Ethiopian men and have children.
- Two individuals are married to Ethiopian men and have no children.
- Two individuals are married to Ethnic Norwegian men and have children. One of
 these women met her husband during the period she lived in Ethiopia; the other one
 met her husband after she came and settled in Norway as a refugee.
- Three individuals were married to Ethiopian men and are currently divorced. Two of them have children.

Social interaction is part of the informants' lives in Norway. When the question regarding having close friendship was brought up, the information given in response by the informants shows that:

- All eighteen individuals have close Ethiopian friends.
- Eleven of the eighteen individuals have close ethnic Norwegian friends.
- Ten of the eighteen individuals have close friends of other ethnicities.

4.2 Informants` experiences, views and thoughts regarding the method of teaching Norwegian language to immigrants, the benefits of acquiring some form of higher education and the Norwegian labour market.

As part of the Norwegian integration Policy, immigrants are allowed as well as expected to take Norwegian language lessons (250 hours minimum) and get some kind of (non-mandatory) practical training courses provided by the authorities. The courses usually lasting from six months up to one year and are supposed to enable immigrants to participate in the Norwegian labour market (mostly within the 'manual labour' sector). If an immigrant chooses to pursue further studies, it would be up to the individual and not required by the integration policy, but it is supported within its theoretical framework, which states that all individuals are to be considered as equals and be given equal opportunities in all spheres of the Norwegian society, and no person (regardless his/her religion culture, ethnicity, etc.) can be discriminated. According to this policy that should make immigrants self-sufficient, subsequently they would be considered by the Norwegian authorities as structurally integrated.

4.2.1.1 Informants` experiences, view and thoughts regarding the method of teaching Norwegian language to immigrants.

After attending certain period of Norwegian Language classes to which immigrants are entitled to as result of the Norwegian integration policy, some of the informants had the additional opportunity and possibility, to study further and graduate within the Norwegian educational system. Half of the informants were happy with the teaching method of the Norwegian language for foreigners which they consider liberal. They seem satisfied in regards of one aspect of the teaching method of the Norwegian language, in their opinion it gives them more freedom compared to the Ethiopian education method by allowing them to explore their self-reliance, which they consider as positive factor for their individuality as well as their confidence.

Nevertheless, half of the total number of informants, especially those who chose to additionally pursue their higher education in Norway are not without certain grievances when it comes to their experiences regarding the learning of the Norwegian language.

This group of informants is not entirely happy with the teaching methods they were taught the Norwegian language by the system. In the opinion of one third of the total informants, such

method does not have a high enough level that would prepare immigrants who wish to acquire some form of higher education by further enrolling in programs taught in Norwegian language. Three of those, partly connect the level and quality of the Norwegian language taught to immigrants and the methods of teaching in Norwegian educational institutions with the individual teaching skills of each teacher.

Informant n.10 stated: "...In fact, it depends on the teacher you have. The teacher in my previous class was good, in a sense that she gave us class activities and exercises. On top of that she constantly encouraged us. But the teacher we had afterwards, was not good; he did not encourage us to work actively and hard."

The rest of this group of informants argue that Norwegian colleges and universities, where higher education programs are mostly taught in Norwegian language need to have a system that gives consideration the quasi handicap of a lot of immigrants studying in those programs.

Informant n. two, who studied physiotherapy for three years, reflected on this issue: "In general I think the studying process was good, or, hmmm...I believe they taught us in good conditions, but there were problems too. Although we as foreigners managed to meet the college`s academic and language criteria and our Norwegian was considered quite fluent, never the less it was quite a challenge to study as equals to the ethnic Norwegian students while having subjects taught in Norwegian. Of course we had one hour of extra tutoring program, but that was not enough...For instance, during exams Arabic speaking students had the possibility to use available dictionaries in their own languages, the rest of us did not have such possibilities because dictionaries in Amharic were not available...There would have definitely been a change for the better in the way we studied and acquired knowledge if they had given us more assistance and consideration."

On the other hand, four of the eighteen informants consider the level and quality of the Norwegian language being taught to immigrants and the education method of the Norwegian educational system in general to be good, as long as the students learn how to take individual initiatives and make efforts to gain broader and deeper knowledge of the subject by asking the teacher's assistance whenever needed.

Commonly, all of the informants agree that it is important to learn Norwegian language as long as they reside in this country. It is the opinion of most of them that the knowledge of Norwegian language allows immigrants to communicate with ethnic Norwegians, as well as

with people of other nationalities. They consider learning the Norwegian language a crucial factor in order for them to be able to function in the Norwegian labour market.

As informant n. 16 put it: "...Yes, most of the Ethnic Norwegians in Oslo understand and speak English, but all official working documents in the Majority of working places are in Norwegian...Although, as you mentioned there are citizens from other Western countries who do not speak Norwegian nevertheless are able to work in this country...Unless one works for an international firm, for instance an oil company, where only their expertise matters, or where one of the working languages of the firm is other than Norwegian, then, like for some Americans, Canadians, French, etc. there is no need to bother and learn the Norwegian language..."

While sixteen of the total eighteen informants regarded their learning of Norwegian language, among other things, as part of learning Norwegian culture as well. Two of the informants (n.4 & n.10) who came to Norway as refugees and have the lowest educational backgrounds compared to the other informants, related the need to learn the Norwegian language specifically with relation to the ability to be able to work, and nothing more.

Only four of the eighteen informants related the possibility of learning the Norwegian language as an additional knowledge which gives them the opportunity to avoid being dependent on other people for translation whenever the need arises. Two of these informants are of the opinion that by learning the Norwegian language, immigrants will gain respect from the ethnic Norwegian majority, which in turn will make it possible to achieve better interaction between them and the later, thus opening a path for some form of integration.

Most of the informants with children stated that learning of the Norwegian language benefits not only them but their children as well. According to them if immigrant parents have a child who goes to kindergarten or school where everything is taught in Norwegian language, it will be very difficult for that parent to follow up on their children's academic performances and give the necessary assistance to their child whenever the need arises.

Two of the eighteen informants, pointed out that it is necessary to learn the Norwegian language because according to one part of the current Norwegian integration policy, immigrants are obliged (individuals between age 18 & 55) to learn Norwegian language (250 hours minimum) and take a course about the Norwegian Society (50 hours) in order to be granted permanent residence followed by the naturalisation into being a Norwegian citizen.

4.2.1.2 Informants' experiences, views and thoughts regarding the benefits of acquiring some form of higher education.

All of the informants without any exceptions are in favour of acquiring higher education. They consider it as a way to better oneself, with the possibility of getting a job related to the acquired profession from a college or university of the Host country. Subsequently, not only individuals get the opportunity of having a better paying job, but a job where they will be respected and treated as an equal professional by others as well.

Three of the twelve informants who have higher education or attended some kind of courses lasting more than one year, admitted that their choices of education was based on the demand of the labour market at the time of their study. The remaining nine informants had different, and I might say, liberal approaches to their choices of study, relating them to personal interests.

Informant n.12 who has been living in Norway and graduated from a nursing college in Oslo admitted: "I did not have any interest in nursing. My interest was to study tourism, but I made a decision to study nursing for practical reasons...It was to make sure that I would get a job...Nursing is a field that allows you to have work opportunities wherever you go..."

When asked to reflect on the possibility that, for immigrants acquiring Higher education in Norway can result in waste of time and money, considering that there might be only a slim possibility for these immigrants to find a job related to his/her profession, because of the person being immigrant, the ups and downs of the labour market in relation to different professions, etc., all of the informants stated as if with one voice, that there is constant rhetoric coming from certain member within the Ethiopian minority group in Oslo that educated immigrants will not be able to get work related to their specialities. Nevertheless the fact that a person has higher education; it gives that person a feeling of self worthiness, a higher self-esteem.

As informant n. fifteen who is currently working on her PhD in statistics stated: "Having Higher education, gives a person the possibility to walk with her/his head high."

Four of the total number of informants, additionally consider the acquisition of higher education as a matter of principle, which is related to their family background in Ethiopia. Since they have been brought up in families where at least one parent and /or some other

member of their family has higher education, it is inscribed in their conscience that life the members of their families, they must get higher education no matter of the circumstances and conditions they live in Norway, because they consider themselves worthy of that and do not expect anything less of themselves.

Informant n.7 who works as a nurse said: "...My family in Ethiopia encouraged me to study."

Informant n. eleven who is a second year masters program in "Public Health Studies" commented on one of the motives that pushed her to get higher education: "Since my childhood, it has always been my aim to get higher education... It was probably the influence of my brothers who attended universities... I have done the so called "physical work" in two places, as a janitor and room cleaner to earn money in this country. The jobs were backbreakers, thus my husband and I decided to go to college and change our future situation... We also wanted to prove to ourselves that we can achieve something better and to be role models to our child in the future."

Another informant, n. thirteen, who has been living in Norway, and is a third year bachelor student in Oslo University, explained her general views on higher education: "...As I said, both of my parents are educated and since my early age I knew that I should go to college, I think that was my main motive for pursuing my studies at the university of Oslo...From an immigrant point of view, I think it is important to get education, not only to be professionally at the same level as Ethnic Norwegians, but also to be able to have a better job and way of life here."

Regardless of the informants` common attitude towards higher education, each of these individuals has acted upon those believes differently.

Six out of the eighteen informants, after studying the Norwegian language (maybe) followed by the studies and graduation from a Norwegian High school or (from six months up one year) short practical courses, decided to limit their ambitions for education due to individual reasons and join the labour market. Except for one, five of the mentioned informants work in the sector of so called "manual labour".

One of such women is informant n.1, who has been living in Norway seven years in total and studied three years in order to graduate high school in this country states: "I did not want to study further because I preferred to earn money instead of continuing my education...No, it is

not the case that money is more important to me, but I have to settle first and have some kind of financial security...So, I must work:"

A couple of other informants explained that it is not as easy as it seems to pursue education as far as one wishes. She explained to that it is typical for people in her situation to put further education on hold. Such decisions are usually related to one of the spouses being already a student making it necessary for the other spouse to work so that the family could have an adequate standard of living. According to her it makes it even more difficult for a person to keep on studying if there are children in the family.

Informant n. six who has been living in Norway for the past nineteen years and works as a janitor said, as if she was thinking aloud: "I am not happy with my job, because I believe that I am capable to have a better job if I studied more... But with my two children...and my husband who is studying economics three years now...At least one of us must work so that the family...especially the kids can be provided with the required necessities...My job is very difficult and tiresome, my body hurts... When my husband finishes his studies and gets a good job, I will change my current working situation by pursuing further studies."

One main point the informants are all in agreement on is that the Norwegian integration policy has not hindered them in any way in their ability to pursue further education in this country.

4.2.1.3 Summary

As part of the Norwegian integration policy, immigrants have the opportunity as well as the obligation to study the Norwegian language. Having the duty and assisted possibility to study the Norwegian language and getting the chance to study and graduate high school within the Norwegian educational system and/or taking certain courses, is regarded as a positive step in the Norwegian integration policy by all eighteen informants.

Some of the informants were relatively satisfied with the standard and method of teaching regarding the Norwegian language and other subjects; wile others, for different reasons have certain grievances in regards to the quality and level of their education within the Norwegian educational system.

Though for different reasons, all informants agreed on the importance of learning the Norwegian language as well as (if possible) acquiring some form of higher education. Among

the twelve informants who chose to further their education, three individuals made their choices of education based on the demands of the labour market at the time of their study, while the rest nine people chose their fields of study based on their personal interests.

Although some of the informants decided to pursue and get some form of higher education, others, after certain limited period of studies, for different reasons, chose to join and become active within the Norwegian labour market. The Norwegian integration policy did not hinder their wishes and goals to pursue further education, instead, factors, such as the informants` individual backgrounds, experiences, heritage, past and/or current civil and economic statuses, etc. had effects on each informant's decision whether or not to pursue their studies in order to acquire some form of higher education or seek some form of employment as soon as possible.

4.2.2 Informants` experiences view and thoughts regarding the Norwegian labour market

After arriving to Norway, All of immigrants go through certain period of settlement that usually varies from six months up to two years. The experiences of immigrants' settlement processes differ individually based on the immigrants motive for migration, education, background, family status, etc. Nevertheless there are common steps which are taken by immigrants leading to certain forms of their structural integration within the Norwegian society. Commonly, education in the form of Norwegian language courses is the first step for such integration. The participation of immigrants within the Norwegian labour market is considered the second and final steps of structural integration according to the Norwegian integration policy.

Some immigrants choose to join the Norwegian labour market during their settlement period just after learning the basics of the Norwegian language. Others choose to complete some sort of education during (and after) their settlement period before becoming 100% active within the Norwegian labour market. Most of the immigrants, who choose to further their education after their settlement period, combine their study process with some form of part time participation within the Norwegian labour market.

Informant n.13 who is a third year Bachelor program student in a college: "...I am a student but I also work part-time in two places..."

Most immigrants living in Norway usually have had more than one employment during the period of stay in this country. The forms of employments differ based on individual education and capability. In the case of the informants, the numbers of jobs the informants have had from the time of their arrival to Norway up to interview date vary from one to nine.

At the time of the interviews, the informants' forms of participation within the labour market showed that fifteen of the eighteen informants had employment related to their education and specialisation among which eleven were employed fulltime or part-time according to their education, while four were participating in the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market.

Two individuals, informant n.5 who was on maternity leave and informant n.7 who was unemployed at the time of the interview had employment in accordance to their level of education prior to putting on hold their working career. One informant made a conscious choice to leave her work which was related to her educational background to engage herself in the private sector. Her decision was based on her personal unwillingness to work under ethnic Norwegian management as well as with ethnic Norwegian co-workers and she considered private sector to be financially more benefiting.

The informants` backgrounds have effects on their decisions regarding the timing and forms of their participation within the Norwegian labour market. Immigrants with financially limited families and relatives in their countries of origin tend to start working as soon as possible without having the luxury to look for and choose a job they might feel will be suitable for them. Because they have people depending on them, theses immigrants keep on working in order to make enough money to send abroad, as well as to be able to lead what they consider a descent level of life in this country.

Informant n.1: "I did not want to study further because I preferred to earn money and help my family..."

Often such immigrants enter a pattern of a circle that is difficult to come out from; they are forced to constantly work without the possibility of a gap in order to change the structure of their lives. Such outcomes form two kinds of immigrants within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market:

- There are immigrants who with time get bitter because they consider themselves trapped and with time become discouraged and resigned to their role in the labour market; such attitudes generate resentments towards the society they live in.
- In contrast, there are those who with time come to terms and embrace their situation and position within the Norwegian labour market.

In some cases, the educational background of immigrants and their families in their country of origin are factors on their choices and decisions regarding the forms of their structural integration. Based on the information gathered from the informants, a pattern of immigrants' goals and behaviour can be drawn. Most of the immigrants whose families have some form of academic education that is above high school in their country of origin, tend to be ambitious and try to not limit their structural integration to the 'manual labour sector' of the Norwegian labour market. These individuals tend either to take their time in choosing the type of work that is related to their educational background or they prefer to study further in order to get more education, while at the same time having part time employments like most students in the Norwegian society.

Immigrants whose families have limited level of academic education in their country of origin tend to be more accepting of their participation in the 'manual sector' of the Norwegian labour market. Like in the case of two informants whose families were farmers, it can be deducted that psychologically these informants have accepted their participation in the 'manual sector' of the Norwegian labour market as an acceptable and normal outcome that is adequate with their mental and physical being. While certain individuals would view such behaviour as lack of ambition on the part of such immigrants is usually viewed by those immigrants as an acceptable way of life that does not infringe in any way on their dignity and their structural integration within the Norwegian society.

Informant n.4: "My parents were farmers...When I finished sixth grade I joined them in farming...Well, I guess I have always been a farmer...I studied the Norwegian language and completed the eighth grade, then I started working...I know, at the time I had the opportunity to continue my education, but when I found a job I just started working."

Immigrants` current living situations in the Norwegian society are also factors in their choices on forms of their participation within the Norwegian labour market. Immigrants with limited educational background and who have children, mostly tend to remain within the 'manual

labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market, once thy enter it. In such cases as well the psychological state of these immigrants can be divided in two groups:

Immigrants who accept as reality that in order to provide an adequate way of life for
their children must sacrifice their personal ambitions and keep on working without
discontinuing their work regardless of their views towards their employment situation.
They presently live for their children, so that those children could have a good life in
the future.

Immigrant n.4 who has one child and works as a janitor in a hospital is one of the immigrants who chose not to have negative attitudes towards their employment situation: "I would have liked to continue my education now, but I have commitments to take care of my child...I am happy with my job because it keeps me busy and because I have good relations with my colleagues."

• Immigrants who resent their forms of participation within the Norwegian labour market; nevertheless they feel trapped and unable to fulfil their ambitions due to the fact that they have to keep whatever employment is available in order to provide adequate living conditions without interruptions for their children. In addition, these immigrants feel that they are not achieving forms of structural integration that their children could be proud of.

Informant n.6 who has two children and works as a janitor in a hospital had expressed her feelings regarding her employment situation: "I do not like my job and if it was not for the necessity to earn money for my family, I would not have worked there."

But not all immigrants who have children and limited level of education decide to remain employed within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market. After a certain period of time, some of them enrol in colleges or universities for further education in order to change their lives and the lives of their family members for the better.

Informant n.12 who has two children and works as a nurse explained her motives for deciding to acquire further education: "I worked in two places as a janitor for a cleaning company and as a housekeeper in a hotel. They were really backbreaking jobs. That is why after have worked a certain period of time my husband and I decided to go to college and change our future...We also wanted to prove to ourselves that we can achieve something and be roll

models for our children...I studied to become a nurse because I knew that I would have no difficulty in finding a job..."

Informant n.18 also works as a nurse and has two children: "some years ago I worked as a janitor for a cleaning company in Oslo...Now that I work as a nurse, my financial situation changed for the better and I feel good about myself by working as an educated professional."

One would think that in a social welfare-state like Norway where equality among individuals and the right for equal opportunity exists as one of the country's policies, it would seem to be an easy decision for any individual to take life changing actions he/she craves and considers necessary. Nonetheless there are certain factors within immigrants `lives that have effects on their choices and decisions on how to proceed with their participation within the Norwegian labour market.

Some immigrants, based on their past individual experiences and culture as well as their perception of the host country and its society consisting of ethnic Norwegian majority, decide whether their ambitions and goals are worth 'rocking their life style'. Because of culture and some unpleasant personal experiences some immigrants are terrified of the idea that they would need to take a study loan in order to get education and be able to change their future employment situations. It is not in the culture of some immigrants to take a study loan as it is just not a custom in their country of origin. Therefore, these immigrants simply prefer not to engage themselves in a study process. Though such behaviour might not be seen as logical to people from Western countries, nevertheless it is considered as the right approach to life by the immigrants.

There are immigrants who make their decisions regarding the forms of their participation within the Norwegian labour market based on them being immigrants in a society consisting of ethnic Norwegian majority, whether they would be able to find employment after using a considerable amount of their time getting education and accumulating financial debts in forms of study loans. They make decisions based on what they consider pure economics: less income for a certain period of time and accumulation of usually long term debts in addition to an uncertain future in employment, compared to current employment (which is usually within the 'manual labour sector' of the Norwegian labour market) with minimal but stable wages.

Informant n.17 shared her views regarding these issues: "...It a wrong attitude, if someone working in the 'manual labour' sector tells me that he/she is happy his/her job, I do not

believe them. In my opinion such people are simply deceiving themselves or giving excuses for their situation...I do not want money to become my master, I believe it is possible to make money while doing the job I like...It is important to get an education in order to get a better job...I know, there are some educated professionals here who are not able to get jobs related to their education, but some cases can also be found in Ethiopia..."

According to the informants, most immigrants are aware of the usefulness of social contacts and different networks in order to facilitate employment opportunities. Often, immigrants with limited educational background who work within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market, tend to socialise with individuals who have similar educational background and employment status as them. Such behaviour is also typical for immigrants who have some form of higher education and are employed based on their education and professionalism. Most of the immigrants realise that compared to ethnic Norwegians, they have a disadvantage when it comes to necessary contacts and networks that would guide and assist them with the employments.

Informant n.2: "For instance when you look for a job, it is recommended or advised to use your own network. But which network would you use? You will definitely use your own circle which consists of foreigners like you...Most of the time, after studying the Norwegian language we lack information on our further opportunities and possibilities. It is mostly our fellow Ethiopians that would assist you with their limited resources and networks...Despite our efforts we do not have close relations with many Norwegians. So why should an ethnic Norwegian help you in getting a job? He/ she would prefer to help his/her close Norwegian friend or relative instead of a foreigner...Yes it is the same in our country (Ethiopia), but that does not make it right...I do not mean all Norwegians are the same, however, overall I do not think that Norwegians are interested in really helping us. Hence it is harder for us to get jobs we want, except in the fields like nursing which are in high demand."

Immigrants` detailed experiences, views and thoughts of their participation within the Norwegian labour market, their associations with people of different ethnicities and nationalities vary according each person individually. Nonetheless, most of the immigrants participating within the Norwegian labour market can be divided into two groups when it comes to their psychological relation with their employment regardless their educational background and their forms of participation within the Norwegian labour market.

4.2.2.1 Informants with grievances towards the Norwegian labour market

One group of informants consists of those immigrants who for different reasons tend to be unhappy with their labour situation. Different issues trigger such negative feelings within immigrants. Those individuals who are active within the 'manual labour' sector feel that the management which is made up mostly of ethnic Norwegians take advantage of them by overloading them with work. It is their opinion that they are being taken advantage off not only because they are working in the 'manual labour' sector, but mainly because they are foreigners.

Informant n.6: "...My job is very difficult and tiresome. Most of the time my body hurts...They always overload us with work...They think that we do not get tired because we are foreigners."

These immigrants insist that they are constantly witnesses to different treatment from the management based on ethnicity, colour, etc. According to them, although there are only few ethnic Norwegians working in such sectors of the Norwegian labour market, nevertheless those who do, get some form of favouritism.

In some cases the immigrants have no respect for the management on personal as well as on professional level. This is due to the immigrants' belief that the management made which is mostly made up of ethnic Norwegians has little respect for their employees because of their ethnicity. On the professional level, it is the belief of some immigrants that the individuals in the management are not qualified to hold that position. It is their opinion that some individuals get certain posts within the Norwegian labour market solely based on their being ethnic Norwegians.

Informant n.6: "...I also do not like my boss because I do not believe that she is capable enough to be a boss. If she were not a Norwegian, probably she would not have got that position."

The grievances towards the working environment and work in general is not limited with immigrants participating in the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market. There are immigrants whose work description is related to their educational background; nevertheless they are also unhappy with certain aspects of their employment situation.

These immigrants feel that although most of them have an education from a Norwegian educational system, their professionalism is constantly questioned by the ethnic Norwegian management as well as their ethnic colleagues. They feel that the have to constantly prove to other people their knowledge and professionalism.

Informant n.2 who quit her job as a physiotherapist shared her views: "I left my job because I did not like working with Norwegians. Especially, I was not happy working under a boss who was ethnic Norwegian, because I did not accept to be treated as a foreigner. Like my Norwegian colleagues, I wanted to be judged by the quality of my work and nothing else."

Informant n. 15 who was a part-time statistician in an organisation as part of her PhD program package said: "It is not the job that I do not like, I just do not feel comfortable with the working environment...The Norwegian colleague who works in pair with me always doubts my ability though we have the same level of professionalism. I always feel that I should prove my competence. It seems to me that he underestimates my professionalism because I am a foreigner."

According to some immigrants' experiences, most of the time their ideas and suggestions as professionals are often quickly dismissed by ethnic the Norwegians at their working place. They believe that no matter what, when push comes to shove, ethnic Norwegians are unable to see past a person's ethnicity, nationality, colour, place of origin, etc and accept and acknowledge an individual's education and professionalism.

Informant n.2: "...Yes the boss we had here was better than bosses in Ethiopia, but that is not the point, the prejudice they have here is what I do not like and accept. If you do something wrong, for them it is because you are a foreigner or because you are from this or that ethnic background...I am not generalising and saying that all Norwegians are the same in that aspect. There are Norwegians who judge you objectively...In general the way I see it, Norwegians put all foreigners in the same box when judging them."

One of the factors that leads to even more negative views of such educated immigrants towards the Norwegian labour market, is their belief that they are especially being unfairly treated by ethnic Norwegians because them being from non-white developing countries.

Based on their experiences they are convinced that a 'double' stigmatization and discrimination is being applied towards them from ethnic Norwegian colleagues and

management. It is their opinion that immigrants from western countries or even those from Eastern countries have more votes of confidence regarding their professionalism.

According to the informants, regardless whether immigrants works in the 'manual labour' sector or have employments related to their educational background; their actions are likely to be quickly judged by most of their ethnic Norwegian colleagues and management on the basis on them being immigrants (especially if one is from a non-white, developing country) instead of their knowledge as individuals.

4.2.2.2 Informants with positive attitudes towards the Norwegian labour market

Not all immigrants are unhappy with the forms of their participation within the Norwegian labour market. There are immigrants who have positively accepted and come with terms with their employment situation and feel at ease within their working environment. Others have the opportunity and possibility to participate in the Norwegian labour market in forms that satisfy their ambitions and/or are related to their educational baggage. They consider themselves lucky not only for having the possibility of having the type of work they consider to be fitting to their education and personality, but for being able to work with open-minded individuals who show them respect based on their professionalism and not their ethnicity, skin colour, country of origin, etc. Although these immigrants are not without some minor grievances towards their employment conditions and/or working environment, overall they are satisfied with the forms of their structural integration.

Informant n.1who works as a kitchen assistant stated: "...I am satisfied with my work, and the environments there is fine."

Informant n.8 who for family reasons is currently unemployed overall had a positive view in regards of her prior experiences within the Norwegian labour market: "I was happy when I used to work in a hotel...But there were certain moments that made me unhappy because of the way the management exploited those foreigners who did not know the Norwegian language and their rights."

Informant n.9 who works as a nurse assistant: "I like my work and I enjoy the working environment as well. Almost all of my colleagues are Norwegians and I have good relationship with them. Sometimes we go out together for dinner of for drinks together..."

Informant n.17 who works as an accountant: "I am very happy with my job...If you get to know Norwegians closely, you will realise that they are very helpful and trustworthy...I have reached a conclusion that it all depends on one 's personality. If I am positive towards them, they become positive towards me and vice versa. For example there were six Norwegian candidates for my current job. But my current boss chose to employ me based on my individuality and competence; ignoring the fact that I am a foreigner...It does not mean that all Norwegians have such positive views, for instance there are two Norwegians under my supervision and I can see that they are unhappy for having a boss who is a foreigner. I think it because they are xenophobic; but that is their problems not mine...No, I do not believe that the majority of Norwegians are xenophobic..."

4.2.3 Summary

Regardless of peoples' ethnicity, nationality, skin colour, religion and country of origin the perception of an adequate form of participation in the Norwegian labour market varies based on individual background; family situation in country of origin, as well as personal experiences. Their current living statuses and family situations are also factors in the choices of the immigrants' forms of participation in the Norwegian labour market. Some immigrants regard their forms of participation in the Norwegian labour market as matter of necessity and not as matter of choice.

Each immigrant has different kind of ambitions and goals. Each one of them makes individual decisions whether to change or not his/her form of participation within the Norwegian labour market which subsequently will lead to the possibility for changes in other spheres of the immigrant's live within the Norwegian society. Educational, social, economic, cultural, etc. backgrounds of immigrants, as well as their families in their country of origin and their current living conditions within the Norwegian society are crucial factors that come into play during such decision making processes. The market demand for certain professions during different period of time and the fact that they are not part of the ethnic Norwegian majority is also taken into account by immigrants when making certain decisions.

Immigrants participating in the Norwegian labour market can be divided into two groups; those who are employed in the 'manual labour' sector and those who whose employment is related to their educational background. Among the immigrants employed in the 'manual

labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market, there are those who resent their work and those who have accepted the forms and conditions of their employment.

The psychological aspects associated with the immigrants` forms of participation within the Norwegian labour market vary individually. There are immigrants who have grievances towards the forms and conditions of their employment, and there are those who have an overall positive attitude towards their employment in general, regardless the sectors of the Norwegian labour market they participate in.

4.3 Informants `experiences, view and thoughts regarding social integration

As the study shows the informants have different causes for migrating to Norway. Those causes have certain effect on the informants' experiences regarding social interaction within the Norwegian society, especially during their settlement period in this country, which usually lasts between six months and two years (according to different individual processes). In addition, further choices made by the informants regarding the structure of their life, in forms of the type of education and participation in the Norwegian labour market, as well as other factors such as network selection, etc. shape the informants' abilities and choices regarding some form of social integration, as well as their views regarding social integration.

4.3.1 Effects of different causes of migration on social integration during the informants` settlement period

According to the data, the informants have different motives for migrating to Norway. Twelve of the eighteen informants were forced to migrate to this country as asylum seekers and had to go through a certain particular settlement process for such individuals in this country. From the time of their arrival, after being processed by the Norwegian authorities, these of informants were sent to camps for asylum seekers set up in different parts of Norway. During their stay in those camps individuals had limited access to close and constant social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. Primarily, they constantly socialized with other Ethiopian asylum seekers and Ethiopians who had already settled, not only because they lived in the same camps and could not avoid interacting on daily basis, but also because of their common language, culture, etc. At the beginning of their stay in the asylum camps, the informants socialized to a lesser degree with asylum seekers of other nationalities mostly due to lack of common language which was resolved in due time with the possibility of studying the

Norwegian language. The fact that all of the people in such camps were forced to leave their home countries, lead them to a certain form of camaraderie.

The situation was different when it came to their interaction with ethnic Norwegians. The asylum seekers mostly interacted with the staff in charge of the camps and their teachers of Norwegian language. Since they did not have many things in common with the rest of the local inhabitants, the opportunities and possibilities to socially interact with them were slim.

As informant n.1 explained, "...I stayed in the camp over a year...I did get assistance from the working staff...Yes, they were ethnic Norwegians... I believe they helped and assisted me because it is their job...I did not have any Ethnic Norwegian friends, I did not have the opportunity because they were only foreigners when I studied Norwegian language...I studied the last two years of the Norwegian High school system with other foreigners, not with Norwegians."

Informants n.2: "...One of the problems was the language barrier...I was with Ethiopians and there was no problem, when I started school it was really difficult to communicate and make friends especially for the first year...I was not comfortable when it came to getting close to other people because of my language limitations."

In rare exceptions some refugees had the opportunity to have close social interaction with few local ethnic Norwegians in the towns where their camps were based. But due to fact that these refugees moved to Oslo for one reason or another, the only contact the have with those Ethnic Norwegians is via occasional phone calls or e-mails.

Regarding this issue, Informant n.18 explains: "...They were an old Norwegian couple who were our only friends among the local people of the place where we have been living...The others did not even want to say 'hi' when they saw us... After we moved, we kept in touch and used to phone each other often, but now, as time passed, we do it rarely."

The circumstances of the informants' cause of migration, followed by their living conditions in the camps, led to a closer and more frequent interaction among Ethiopians and limited the possibility for social interaction on a large scale between them and ethnic Norwegians causing a social fracture during that period of time. Some informants understand that such outcomes are not desirable and are optimistic that can be changed.

Informant n.18 had a positive attitude towards the situation: "You have to always take the first step to have contact with the Norwegians, because they are reserved and have fears of foreigners who are not white. I do not think it is because they are racist, I think they did not have much opportunity to get acquainted with people other than Europeans...There were parents of some students we incidentally met...When they came to visit the place where we lived, we treated them well...Thereafter those parents became our friends and we had good relationship."

In contrast to such attitude, most of the informants who migrated to Norway as asylum seekers perceive such phenomena as the result of the negative views ethnic Norwegians have towards asylum seekers/refugees and/or people from developing countries. The study further shows that such fracture stays imprinted in the minds of some of the immigrants.

Informant n.14 reflects on her experience in a Norwegian refugee camp: "...Honestly, I had a positive experience...Nevertheless, there was a problem of systematic segregation that you do not see but you can sense...I believe that is not my problem...It is the problem of those people who discriminate me because of my colour."

The fact that there are some cases when immigrants who have already settled in Norway influence newly arrived asylum seekers with negative discourses regarding the ethnic Norwegian society, sometimes hinder the beginning social interaction process, at the time when those asylum seekers do not yet have enough experience and knowledge of Norway and its society.

As informant n.17 remembers: "...My first impression was negative and shocking. When we arrived we were escorted by a Tanzanian woman who was a driver who working for the immigration office or something...While she was driving us to the temporary camp, the woman told us that we came to a bad country where the people are racists...I was really shocked and blame myself for coming."

Informant n.18: "...And the Ethiopian we met gave us a negative description of the country... I felt bad and regretted for coming... But then I started to look at the Norwegian society from a different angle..."

In the cases of four informants who migrated to Norway as result of marriage to Ethiopian men who have permanent residence or Norwegian citizenships, and one informant who migrated to this country as result of family reunion, the outcomes regarding their social integration during the settlement periods are similar to the immigrants who came to Norway as refugees.

These outcomes occur because from the moment of these informants` arrival to Norway, they are introduced to the Ethiopians living in this country and during their settlement period, they are mainly in constant contact with the Ethiopian society, making it difficult for most of them to have the opportunity and possibility to interact with individuals of other ethnicities.

When asked about the period of her settlement, informant n.2 who migrated to Norway as result of family reunion answered: "...I was mostly with Ethiopian relatives and friends...I have mixed feelings regarding the period of my settlement, I have good and bad memories...I was unable to interact much with ethnic Norwegians..."

On the other hand, informant n.16 told me: "During my settlement period, I met a Norwegian family who had adopted and Ethiopian child... We are friends to date."

The immigrants' limited possibility and opportunity for social interaction with Ethnic Norwegians is not the only reason why they tend to interact socially among themselves more often. The feeling of loneliness in a foreign country is a very powerful factor that can affect an individual's behaviour regarding his/her attachment to other people in the quest of support, understanding, companionship, etc. And who else is in a better position to understand the feelings, worries, etc. of an immigrant, than another immigrant from the same country of origin who is in a similar position (or who has gone through a similar settlement process in Norway)?

Informant n.1: "...I am not happy with my settling period...Mainly it has been a period of loneliness, or the feeling of loneliness...It was hard."

Like in the case of the asylum seekers, the lack of interaction with ethnic Norwegians and the lack of knowledge regarding their host country at the time made it easy for this group of informants to become influenced by some discourses made by some Ethiopian residents that painted the Norwegian society in a negative image. And like in the cases of the refugees, with time and through personal experiences, some of these informants' views regarding Norway

and its society changed and became more understanding or positive, while others remained with the negative views.

Informant n.6: "...In fact, I had information from my husband about the situation here, and my impression was not a positive one...I had my family and my Ethiopian friends...I had no social contact with ethnic Norwegians at that time... Afterward, when I started working, I had colleagues who were young ethnic Norwegians...We had good relations as colleagues."

One of the informants who migrated to Norway as result of marriage to an ethnic Norwegian man had more possibility and opportunity to closely socialise with Other Ethnic Norwegians. This is due to the fact that after arriving to this country the informant acquired some Ethiopian friends, but in addition spent a lot of her time interacting with her husband's relatives and friends who are ethnic Norwegians. As a result, during the period of her settlement, she was able to experience and make up her mind accordingly regarding social interaction with Ethnic Norwegians without any obstacles, if the language barrier at the initial stage of her settlement period in this country is not taken into consideration.

4.3.2 Effects of different forms of structural integration on social integration

According to my research all of the informants have attended Norwegian language courses up to a certain level. The classes were made up of one ethnic Norwegian teacher and students who were all foreigners of different ethnicities. Although such events did not give the informants the possibility to interact with a large group of ethnic Norwegians, nevertheless they had the opportunity and possibility to interact and socialise with immigrants of other Ethnicities and learn about their culture. Such classes broadened their knowledge not only by them learning the Norwegian language, but learning about people of different ethnicities and nationalities and their culture as well. Whether people are able to understand and accept the views and cultures of others varies individually according to educational backgrounds, to personal experiences and in some cases lack of experiences.

It can be considered that during the Norwegian language learning period, most of the informants (except informant n.3, who was already married to an ethnic Norwegian man at the time) were more or less in the same position when it came to the lack opportunities and

possibilities to interact with ethnic Norwegians. The difference in those opportunities and possibilities arose with the informants's further decisions on how to shape their lives.

The Data shows, that in regards to the informants' interaction with individuals of other ethnicities, there is a difference between those informants who have pursued further education in order to get some kind of higher education and those who did not. The forms of their participation in the Norwegian labour market define their access to the social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. In general, different forms of structural integration determine partially whether immigrants' views and opinions regarding other ethnicities are based on individual opportunities and experiences or hearsay.

4.3.2.1 Informants with high school (or less) level of education

Five informants, who for personal reasons did not want to elaborate, decided that they will not pursue higher education. The data shows that four out of those five informants do not have close ethnic Norwegian friends as well as friends of other ethnicities.

This group of informants missed out on the possibility of interacting with ethnic Norwegians by not having participated in the Norwegian educational system together with them. They did not get the opportunity to get socially and closely acquainted with ethnic Norwegian students and make their decisions, choices and opinions regarding the Norwegian ethnic majority, partly based on experiences of daily basis interaction with them.

Informant n.1: "Yes, I have studied the Norwegian language for one year...I studied with other expatriates, not with Norwegians."

Except one individual, who is currently unemployed, all informants who do not have some kind of higher education from the Norwegian educational system, are currently active in the so-called 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market. According to their explanation, they understand and accept that due to their lack of education the choice of jobs is limited for them.

Informant n. 10 who looks after elderly people in a nursing home understands and accepts her current position: "I am happy with my work...Now my skills of Norwegian language are not very good and I do not have much education...But I am planning to study in the future and get another job..."

Due to the fact that people who work in that sort of labour sectors are mostly foreigners (very few ethnic Norwegians work in such sectors), this group of informants does not have much possibility for social interaction with ethnic Norwegians at their places of work.

Informant n. 6 who works as a janitor in a hospital explained: "The work that I have does not require for me to have much contact with the Norwegians... I have been working here for nine years and most of my colleagues are foreigners."

Informant n.8, who for personal reasons is currently unemployed, talked about the period she used to work in a hotel as a housekeeper: "Most of my colleagues were foreigners from the Philippines and Sri Lanka, the Norwegians were in the management..."

Although, all five informants who do not have higher education constantly interact with individuals of other ethnicities and Nationalities, four of them do not have close relationship with these people. Such outcomes can be attributed to the informants not being open-minded and their lack of self-confidence when it comes to close interaction with individuals of other cultures.

Informant n.6: "...I go out for tea most of the time with Ethiopians, not with Norwegians or other foreigners...I do not know exactly why, but I prefer that."

Informant n.10: "...There are few Norwegians who work with me. The rest are Ethiopians and foreigners...I am friends with the Ethiopians who work with me, but the rest of my colleagues, I look upon as just colleagues, no more no less."

4.3.2.2 Informants with education above high school level from a Norwegian educational system

Thirteen of the eighteen informants, who decided to study beyond high school in Norway, had (still have) the opportunity and possibility to socially interact with Ethnic Norwegians on the same educational level first as fellow students, then as colleagues. The informants` views and opinions regarding ethnic Norwegians are based on their personal experiences of interaction during the periods of their studies and/or their places of work.

Because the experiences in such a group of immigrants differ individually, consequently, their views and opinions vary accordingly. Regardless of the results, constant and close social interaction gives immigrants as well as ethnic Norwegians the possibility to be closely acquainted, understand and accept one another not only as people with different culture, religion, background, etc. but as different people on the individual level as well. In order to have a harmonious social interaction resulting in adequate social integration form, it is necessary to have the willingness and participation of all concerned parties (immigrants and ethnic Norwegians). Different forms of social interactions between immigrants and ethnic Norwegians mean different experiences of both parties; subsequently the outcomes will differ as well. Based on their individual experiences, immigrants make their decisions regarding their daily basis actions as well as their thoughts and views on social integration.

Harmonious social interactions can be regarded as positive experiences of those involved in the process. Immigrants with such positive experiences from the period of studies and/or work, subsequently have positive views towards Ethnic Norwegians. The outcome of such experiences results in close friendship among fellow students and /or colleagues regardless their ethnicity.

Among the thirteen informants that have some king of higher education, nine individual have close and constant social interaction with Ethnic Norwegians. Such outcomes can be attributed to each informant's individual luck in meeting open minded, understanding and accepting people. I use the term 'luck', because my study will further show, having education and being open-minded do not always go hand-in-hand.

Often, simply having the possibility and ability to socially interact with ethnic Norwegians, no matter how open-minded they are, is not enough to have close relations. From the informants`

responses it is obvious that some immigrants had to put extra efforts and understanding into the social interaction with those Norwegians.

It is not easy for immigrants to form a friendship bond with ethnic Norwegians. According to the Informants, such phenomena can be attributed to different reasons:

• Due to their culture, ethnic Norwegians are individualists and their being reserved as people is one of the features of that individualism in comparison to people of other nationalities or ethnicities. Subsequently the first steps of interaction are usually taken by the immigrants.

Informant n.2: "...They are not even open and sociable among them...It took me quite some time to have Norwegian friends when I was studying."

Informant n.3: "Well, I would say that their individualistic traits made it difficult for them to communicate with other people, especially with foreigners... That is why, if you want to have Norwegian friends, you are the one who must make an effort and take the first steps towards knowing them..."

Informant n.18: "You always have to take the first steps to have contact with Norwegians, because they are reserved people...They do not even socialise easily between themselves."

• Most ethnic Norwegians do not have prior deep knowledge regarding immigrants from non-Western countries, especially those who came from developing countries. Most of their knowledge is based on the information they get mainly from the Norwegian mass media. Many Ethnic Norwegians do not contemplate on the fact that the mass media usually portray just part of the picture of developing countries and their societies. As a result, ethnic Norwegians are initially sceptic or afraid of immigrants, especially those from developing countries.

Informant n.2: "...To be an educated person does not necessarily make one open-minded. Most Norwegians do not have much exposure to other cultures, except of Western countries..."

Informant n.17: "One of my Norwegian friends once told me that she used to hate foreigners, especially Africans because of personal bad experience and prejudice. But now she has changed her mind because of me..."

The fact that the informants have or had close ethnic Norwegian friends does not mean they are without grievances when the question of social interaction with Ethnic Norwegians arises in general terms. During immigrants` experiences of social interactions, individuals might have friendly relations with ethnic Norwegians; nevertheless most of those individuals are bound to experience the feeling of being labelled and stigmatized, thus socially rejected by other ethnic Norwegians in a certain period of their lives. The different motives and causes for such rejections are interpreted by each immigrant individually, according to their situation.

Informant n.15: "I had a teacher at the university, whom I really admire and like...I remember there were some incidents where I felt that my intellect as an individual was questioned. For example, if he asked me something and I gave him the correct answer his reaction was of amazement and excitement...Probably he did not expect me to be able to answer correctly, because he saw me as black person who came from Ethiopia who did not know much. One time he even asked me whether I have ever seen white people before I came to Norway...I did not expect such things from an educated and respected person like him, but I understand, that having a specific education is different from having general knowledge."

Informant n.17: "...I think of them as a society where people have good and bad qualities, just like any other society."

Two of the thirteen informants with some kind of higher education had and/or still have, what can be referred to as 'bad socialising experiences' with Ethnic Norwegians during the period of theirs study, and/or during their participation in the Norwegian labour market. These individuals did not, and still do not have close social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. Because of their bad experiences, social integration within the Norwegian society is no longer their goal. According to them and some other informants, the blame for the lack of interaction lies entirely on the negativity that ethnic Norwegians have towards immigrants from developing countries. In their opinions the reasons for such outcomes are:

• The majority ethnic Norwegians are racists and discriminate against foreigners from developing countries in particular. Deep inside, they are of opinion that they are better than non-white immigrants from developing countries. Though the ethnic Norwegian majority do not express their feelings publicly or directly, it is easy for any immigrant who has lived in Norway for certain years to spot the racism of ethnic Norwegians through their behaviour and actions.

In formant n.12: "...Of course it is difficult for foreigners to get descent jobs in Norway because of discrimination and that is an apparent fact. Some people even change their names for Norwegian ones in order to overcome this problem."

Most ethnic Norwegians make distinction of people by country and by colour when it
comes to social interaction. They would rather have close contacts with people from
Western countries than people from developing countries.

Informant n.2: "...If you take a white American, a coloured American, a Norwegian, an Eastern European and an African, the majority of the Norwegians will put the white American in first place, the coloured American in second place, themselves in third place, the East European in fourth place and the African in last place..."

 Some ethnic Norwegians feel threatened and uncomfortable when they interact with immigrants from developing countries with identical or higher level of education and professionalism. This is due to the fact that they internally perceive themselves superior to people who are not from Western countries. When that perception does not correspond to reality, they tend to distance themselves from such immigrants.

Informant n.15: "I used to teach French language in a school for grownups here in Oslo. For some period of time, they thought that I was a coloured French woman and everything way okay. But, from the day I told them I was an Ethiopian, their reactions changed totally. It showed in their behaviour that they became uncomfortable and unhappy...Well, no matter how you or anyone tries to look at this, I know what I am talking about and no one can tell me otherwise because I stand by my opinion...Patrick, you are becoming like some Norwegians by trying to find some excuses for racist behaviours of some people."

 Most ethnic Norwegians can not come to terms with the fact that a person's ability to gain knowledge and become a professional in a specialized field is not connected with ones country of origin, ethnicity, skin colour, culture, religion, etc.

Informant n.12: "...They always try to undermine you; they do not even want to take your suggestions and hesitate to give you responsibilities during group work."

• In an environment where ethnic Norwegians are the majority, and there are only few immigrants from developing countries, the ethnic Norwegians tend to gang up in a mutual consent to exclude the immigrants from social interaction. In contrast, in an international environment where there are substantial numbers of immigrants, ethnic Norwegians tend to socialise more with everyone instead of among themselves. Such behaviour is viewed by these two informants as cowardly.

Informant n.12: "I do not really know the reason, but it seemed the Norwegian students did not want to mix with foreigners. They avoided us and preferred to hang with their own among themselves...I think it is because they were narrow minded..."

• If a foreigner does something that is considered negative in the Norwegian society, most ethnic Norwegians grab the opportunity to generalise and portray all foreigners in a negative aspect. It is as if they are waiting for such opportunities to somehow express their racism and dislike towards non-white immigrants from developing countries in particular.

Informant n.2: "...The prejudice they have here is what I do not like and accept. If you make a mistake and do some things wrong; for me it is because it is humanly, but for them it is simply because you are a foreigner, or because you are from this or that ethnic background..."

Informant n.15: "...It depends, but most of the Norwegians put us all foreigners from developing countries in the same basket, despite our different nationalities...Most of them view us as unproductive people who do nothing except actively reproduce."

• Due to the fact that most ethnic Norwegians are cold and non-sociable people, particularly when it comes to socialising with non-white immigrants from developing countries, the process of social interaction with them is more like a hard task instead of being an enjoyable experience. Social interaction with ethnic Norwegians is not worth the time and the effort of immigrants; therefore social integration is not and should not be a goal for them any longer.

One immigrant who had close social interaction with ethnic Norwegians at a certain period of time, had to interrupt the constant close interaction due to some factors of life. Some people move and settle in other countries and towns; others start families and do not have much time for social interaction, or they get introduced to new social networks, etc.

Informant n.15: "When I was in the Masters program, I had two Norwegian friends...But they moved, one lives in the United States, The second one moved to another town and she became a mother...currently we do not contact each other frequently."

The informant's current ongoing experience regarding social interaction with ethnic Norwegians can not be referred to as a positive one. Nevertheless, based on personal experiences, it is her opinion that people are different. Therefore, regardless her current bad experience of social interaction with ethnic Norwegians; she does not have negative views and opinions of those people. This informant has a more understanding and explanatory approach towards the behaviour of some people (ethnic Norwegians) which can be regarded as negative.

This informant relates some of her current negative experiences to ignorance of some ethnic Norwegian individuals with regards to different social, cultural, ethnical, religious, etc aspects of people. The type of values that are taught to these people when they were growing up, primarily within their families, and later in the Norwegian society would shape their understanding of the meaning: 'all people are equal'. The social environment they were brought up in, and the values they were taught will determine their capability of accepting all people as equals regardless of their country of origin, ethnicity, skin colour, culture, religion, etc. It will determine whether these people can work on what they have in common with immigrants and try to understand and accept some of their differences, instead of shutting of

people they consider different from them. With the right upbringing and education any ethnic Norwegian would be able to look any given immigrant as an 'individual' person, instead of as an 'immigrant'.

Informant n.15: "... There is a Chinese colleague with whom I have good relation...The other Norwegians who work with us made no effort to socialise with us, but when a British person came to work there, these Norwegians were so eager always to talk to him...And they spoke English with that person although he spoke good Norwegian...I feel sorry for those Norwegians, because their behaviour was so pathetic...But I do not judge them negatively, it is the way they were brought up and educated."

According to this of informant, the reluctance of some ethnic Norwegians to socially interact closely with immigrants is related to their reserved nature. It is the informants' opinion that ethnic Norwegians seem to be reluctant to interact even among themselves, though on a lesser scale.

4.3.3 Effects of other factors on social integration

When it comes to factors that have effects on the informants' social integration, two factors have already been pointed out earlier which are the effects of different causes of migration on social integration during the informants' settlement period, and the effects of different forms of structural integration. In addition, there are other factors in the lives of the informants that have certain effects on the informants' opportunities and possibilities for social interaction with individuals of different Ethnicities and Nationalities. In some cases such factors can be in the form of different religious and social networks, as well as networks that are related to their parenthood and their male spouses. All these factors have the capability to shape the forms of the informants' social integration within the Norwegian society.

4.3.3.1The role of religion in social integration

The informants' religious beliefs and practices show they are not religiously integrated in Norway. Nevertheless religion is one of the factors that have effect partly on the forms of their social interaction. How often they practice their religion, as well as where and with who

determines their ability to be part of certain networks, thus partly shaping their social interaction.

Twelve of the eighteen informants, who practice the religion of Orthodox Christianity, normally attend the Sunday masses at the Ethiopian church in Oslo. The majority of the parishioners attending those masses are Ethiopians, but there are some Eritreans as well. Such events give this group of informants to closely interact on weekly basis with their fellow countrymen and women.

Two informants who practice the religion of Islam, one informant, who practices the religion of Catholic Christianity and another informant who practice Buddhism, choose to do so privately in their homes and on their own time. Therefore, during their religious practices these informants do not get opportunities to socially interact with other people.

One informant who practices the religion of Pentecost Christianity and another informant who is a Born Again Christian, attend mass on a weekly basis at their churches on Saturdays. As in the case of the informants practicing Orthodox Christianity, most of their fellow parishioners are from Ethiopia, thus making it possible for constants and close social interaction.

The informants' religious affiliations and practice frequencies and consistencies give fifteen of the eighteen informants the possibility to interact and develop certain forms of social integration with their country fellow men/women. In contrast, it can be concluded that in the case of theses eighteen informants, religion does not function as an enabler for their social interaction with certain groups of ethnic Norwegians who practice religion on their free time. The informants do not interact with ethnic Norwegian on the religious level.

4.3.3.2 Effect of parenthood on social integration

Some immigrants migrate to Norway with their children; others give birth to children within or outside wedlock after they arrive to this country. Most of immigrants' children grow up and are educated within the educational system of the Norwegian society, where they are taught a variety of subjects as well as the ways of the Ethnic Norwegian life. Like in many other countries, in Norway, parents are expected to follow up the educational process and

progress of their children, and if needed, assist them with their education according to their abilities. In addition to being involved in their children's educational processes, it is common for parents to take part in different activities outside the educational system.

Whether parents get actively involved in the lives of their children outside the house, is an individual decision. Ten of twelve informants with children are actively involved in their children's activities inside and outside the house. During such activities, eight of those informants had the opportunity and possibility to socially interact with the parents of their children's friends who are of other nationalities enabling them to establish close contacts with some Ethnic Norwegians.

On the other hand, two of the ten informants with children were actively involved in range of activities concerning their children; nevertheless, those processes did not enable their social interaction with other parents from other ethnicities or nationalities. Such outcomes can be attributed the informants' personal choices:

- Informant n.12, a nurse with two children, has made the decision not to seek close contact any longer with ethnic Norwegians because of bad interaction experiences in the past.
- Informant n.18 is also a nurse and has two children as well; she actively participated in her children's activities. Her reasons for not taking advantage of such accesses to social interaction with individuals of other ethnicities and nationalities are related to her religious affiliation. Because, for some reasons unknown to me, it is common for 'Born Again Christian' Ethiopians to avoid social interaction with people outside their religious network.

Two of the twelve informants do not have much involvement in their children's lives outside their houses. Both are individuals who do not have any form of higher education and are active in the 'manual labour' sector within the Norwegian labour market. Their decisions of non-involvement in their children's lives are mostly based on the opinion that they are not up to the challenge, or lack of interest which is related to their upbringing and educational background in their home country.

4.3.3.3 Effects of different networks on social integration

Most of the informants socially interact with other Ethiopians through the network of the Ethiopian community in Oslo; a social club legally registered with the Norwegian authorities. Since they frequent the Ethiopian community at least once a month on regular basis, consequently the association with such network is one of the means to closely and constantly interact in the environment of the Ethiopian culture for most of the informants and their children who are granted the opportunity to learn and interact in an environment of Ethiopians and their culture.

Ten of the eighteen informants are married to Ethiopian men permanently residing in Oslo. As a result, they have additional networks consisting of their spouses' friends and their families. The majority of such networks consist solely of Ethiopians due to the fact that they are based not only on friendship, but same culture and nationality as well. Such combination gives the more possibility for a closer relation of these informants with their fellow Ethiopians, rather than giving them access to social interaction with ethnic Norwegians.

Although such networks are some of the means for most of the informants to socially interact with other Ethiopians, they do not enable them to socially interact with ethnic Norwegians. In that perspective, such networks have no positive role in the informants' social integration within the Norwegian society.

Two of the eighteen informants are married to ethnic Norwegian men. They have the opportunities and possibilities to socially interact with ethnic Norwegian individuals through their spouses. The fact that their spouses are Ethnic Norwegians gives these two informants access to constant social interaction with other relatives and members of their husbands' relatives as well as friends who are often from the ethnic majority of the Norwegian society.

Compared to these two informants, the other sixteen can be considered at disadvantage on this front, because apart their structural integration and in some cases their parenthood, these informants do not seem to have networks that would give them access for the social interaction with Ethnic Norwegians.

4.3.4 Summary

There are various factors in the lives of immigrants that have effects on the forms of their social integration within the Norwegian society. Immigrants' individual experiences regarding the causes of their migration and settlement process affect each individual differently when it comes to the opportunity and possibility for their social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. The majorities of the immigrants who are from developing, non-white countries, either have negative experiences of social interaction with ethnic Norwegians, or due to their life style chose not to or did not have any opportunity and possibility for such social interaction.

After arriving to Norway, all immigrants develop certain views and opinions regarding ethnic Norwegians based on their experiences or lack of experiences of social interaction with them during their settlement period as asylum seekers in asylum camps or in the surroundings of their families. Subsequently, the views and opinions these immigrants have in regards to ethnic Norwegian majority differ. Some are negative, while others are positive. A third of these immigrants have non-judgemental and/or understanding and neutral views and opinions when it comes to ethnic Norwegians.

In addition to their personal experiences, there are other common factors that have effects on immigrants` forms of social interaction within the Norwegian society during their settlement period. Immigrants who migrate to Norway seeking refugee status go through a common and similar settlement process lasting between six months and two years. Such groups of immigrants have little opportunity and possibility for social interaction during that period. Subsequently their views and opinions of the ethnic Norwegian majority are mostly based on common lack of interaction with the later. Similar pattern of behavioural and psychological outcomes can be observed with immigrants who migrate to Norway as result of family reunion or marriage to Ethiopian men with permanent residency in this Norway.

Immigrants, who migrate to this country as result of marriage to Norwegian men, tend to be in a different position when it comes to social interaction with ethnic Norwegians during their settlement period. From the beginning of their arrival, such immigrants have the opportunity to experience certain forms of social interaction with ethnic Norwegians through their spouses, thus giving them the possibility to form views and opinions regarding social

interaction in this country and the ethnic Norwegian majority. Such immigrants mostly have positive experiences of interaction, thus their views and opinions regarding ethnic Norwegians tend to be positive.

Different forms of immigrants` structural integration have effects on their social integration. Immigrants with some form of higher education and participate within the Norwegian labour market related to their educational background have more access to social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. The practical and psychological outcomes of those interactions are different based on individual experiences. Immigrants with what is to be considered positive social interaction experiences at their places of study or employment, have positive views and opinions regarding social interaction and ethnic Norwegians, and vice versa.

Immigrants with limited level of education and are mostly active within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market, have limited access to social interaction with ethnic Norwegians at their places of employment. This is due to the fact that in recent years, fewer and fewer ethnic Norwegians participate within the 'manual labour sector of the Norwegian labour market. The Mostly negative views and opinions these immigrants have in regards to ethnic Norwegians are mainly bases on assumptions and hearsay.

In addition to immigrants' causes of migration and forms of structural integration other factors have effects on the forms of their social integration. One such factor is religion, which in majority cases of immigrants from developing countries does not act as an enabler of social interaction between them and ethnic Norwegians. Because of different religion between immigrants from developing countries and the ethnic Norwegian majority, the places of practices and worships differ denying them of the opportunity and possibility to socially interact during such gatherings.

Different networks also have effects on immigrants` forms of social integration. Some networks are built through parenthood. By getting involved in their children's education and other activities, immigrants from developing countries can get the opportunity and possibility to socially interact with other children's parents consisting of other ethnicities as well as ethnic Norwegians. Two different trends regarding the activities are evident; the majority of immigrant parents with some form of higher education tend to be active in all the spheres of

their children's` lives. In contrast, immigrants with limited education for various reasons tend not to get involved in their children's lives outside the house.

Married immigrants have the opportunity and possibility to build up networks through their spouses. Immigrants from developing countries, whose spouses are from the same country, tend to have access to networks consisting of their country men/women. Such networks do not act as enablers of social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. Then again, there are immigrants with ethnic Norwegian spouses, who have the opportunity and possibility to socially interact on constant basis through networks, which usually consist mostly of Ethnic Norwegians.

5. Research findings and data analysis of informants` experiences, views and thoughts regarding cultural integration

People of different ethnicities and nationalities have different cultures. That means they have different traditions of doing certain things and they have different values and approaches to certain ideas as well as their practical execution. If one is to consider culture as a way of approaching and executing things in life, the study of the eighteen informants revealed there are some differences in what these informants in general consider the Norwegian culture and their own culture.

This chapter is about the understanding that immigrants have a general notion of what they consider the Norwegian culture. Overall they consider the Norwegian culture as being the ways Ethnic Norwegians lead their lives. But every person has his/her individual way of interpreting and being able to adopt certain traits of that culture. The level and forms of discrepancies in cultures and acceptance of other cultures vary according to immigrants' individual backgrounds, education, experiences, heritage, their life in their host country, etc. Subsequently, the choices and abilities to accept or reject the Norwegian culture in certain forms or as whole differ according to every individual.

Informant n.2: "There are certain things that I see as a Norwegian culture, for example, hiking, travelling and camping with their children..."

Informant n.3: "...The Norwegian culture is the Norwegian language, to keep quiet in the train and respect the space of others, not to talk loudly in public areas...We are more used to living as a collective, whereas they are individualists."

Informant n. 16: "...Well, the Norwegian culture is travelling to their summer/winter houses during public holidays, skiing, sharing domestic activities..."

5.1 Cultural preferences and choices regarding spousal relations within families

In regards to the cultural aspects of spousal relations within families in Ethiopia, a system of patriarchy exists in majority cases. Such form of relation is established and still exists in a lot of the families, especially in rural areas due to certain historical developments. The fact is that until the last four decades, both in rural as well as urban areas, the so-called bread winners within Ethiopian families were mostly men. The women did not have many choices due to lack of education but to assume the roles of housewives where they had the task of

performing all the household chores and bringing up children, mostly without any help from their spouses.

The immigrants do not view such intra-familial relations negatively. In their opinion that such outcomes are reflections of lack of adequate policies regarding equal opportunities for education in a country. Because most of the women (especially in rural areas) limited education or none whatsoever, they are not able to find jobs that would enable their financial independence. Consequently, the male spouse being the financial earner and controller of the family's finances assumes the role of the head of the family, where as the woman being financially dependant on her spouse is engaged in household keeping and raising children. These outcomes are perceived by the immigrants as reasonable division of labour among the members of the family given the circumstances.

Informant n.15whose father was head of a department in the Ethiopian ministry of foreign affairs and mother was a housewife, explained: "My father mostly took decisions in family matters and was considered the head of our family because my mother did not work and financially depended on him."

When it comes to the Norwegian culture of intra-family relations between adults, the immigrants argue that there are certain factors in this country that shape relations within a household. In a country like Norway where the level of education is equally high for men and women in urban and rural areas, both sexes have the opportunity and possibility to participate in the Norwegian labour market. In addition, due to the fact that Norway is welfare state with a relatively small population, even those individuals with limited or no education are still able to earn enough and be financially independent by participating within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market.

Informant n. 10 who take care of elderly people in a nursing home stated: "...I expect my husband to take equally part in all domestic chores, otherwise..."

All eighteen informants argue that like in the majority of cases in Norway, the notion of one spouse as head of the family is absent when both adults within a family are active in the labour market. It is only normal for them to share house hold chores and the upbringing of their children. According to the informants, it would be very difficult and not right for the women spouses to take care of the household by themselves, after a full day's work. In most of the cases, women in Norway are financially independent and in case they do not get

assistance with household related tasks from their spouses, they are able to put an end to such form of relation without having to worry for their future financial wellbeing.

Informant n.5: "her, there is equality among men and women. Both can work and earn money, there is no gender based disparity and they can do whatever they want..."

When comparing the two cultures of relationships between partners within families, the informants do not regard one better than the other. Based on different circumstances, they deem both cultures as acceptable and indispensable in order for relations in families to function harmoniously.

Informant n.1 elaborated on her possible future pans: "...If I get married in the future, we will lead our lives in the Norwegian way since we live here."

Informant n.2 who has been married to an Ethiopian man for thirteen years said: "We got married here in Norway...My husband and I have no division of work based on gender biases. We both do domestic chores...We have three kids...In the past two years, my husband was in charge of most domestic activities and raising our children, because I was very busy with my restaurant business..."

Informant n.6: "My husband and I share all domestic chores equally, it is a practical necessity, and because having spent all day out working one gets tired and can not do additional work at home alone."

5.2 Cultural preferences and choices regarding children's upbringing

Overall, regarding the question of the culture of children's upbringing and education, all eighteen informants are in favour of a so-called Ethio-Norwegian practice. Nevertheless, in their opinion both cultures of raising children have positive and negative aspects. According to them, there are positive aspects of the Ethiopian culture in regards to upbringing of children, because children grow up with unlimited love for their immediate family members and relatives and they learn to show proper respect towards all adults. The children also learn to live in close contact with their relatives and not become loners. Girls learn not to behave the same way as boys. In contrast, there is what these informants consider negative aspects of the Ethiopian culture in regards to the upbringing of children such as:

- Children can be subjected to physical abuse as a form of punishment by any adult member of the family, a relative and in some cases by teachers at schools.
- Children can be subjected to verbal abuse as a form of punishment by any adult member of the family, a relative and in some cases by teachers at schools.
- Due to traditional adults` authoritarianism, many children grow up with a kind of fear and lack of self-confidence. In traditional Ethiopian households, it is not customary for children under certain age to eat at the same table as their parents. Children are expected to agree and do everything that an adult member of the family requires. The opinions of children are irrelevant and they are expected not to interfere in discussions conducted by grown ups.
- There are more restrictions towards girls than boys in most Ethiopian households.
- Although prohibited by law, the traditional practices of girls' genital mutilation still
 exist in some rural areas.
- Not many practical actions are taken by the government to ensure the protection of children's rights.
- Children do not enough attention in regards to their wishes and needs.

Informant n.5: "...The Norwegian culture of raising children is better, because in Ethiopia children get less attention regarding the things that are essential to them..."

Informant n.6: "When we grow up, in most cases we are not raised in a manner that develops our confidence to express ourselves in groups or in public. I see this as a negative aspect of the Ethiopian culture of raising children."

Informant n.14: "...In our family there was a system of hierarch. There is no room for democratic debates and discussions between adults and children...I wish things were different, but that is the way it was..."

Informant n.17: "...Only the female members of our family did domestic chores, our brothers had more freedom and more time on their hands...When I think about it now, I know that it was not a good practice."

When examining the Norwegian culture of children's upbringing, all of the informants are of the opinion that with positive aspects such as respect and protection of children's rights, adequate attention regarding children's wishes and needs, development of children's individualism, self confidence and self-reliability, come what they consider as negative aspects, such as:

- Excessive interference from the authorities and schools in parent/child relations.
- Mostly, the amount of freedom given to children is excessive for their age.
- Children grow up to be selfish.
- The respect that the children have towards adult family members, relatives and people in general is limited.
- When children grow up, the bond and love they have towards their immediate family and relatives is limited.
- Children become loners after they grow up.

Informant n.4 was born and raised in a rural area of Assebetefery in Ethiopia. Both her parents are farmers and at the time of the interview she was working as a janitor in a hospital in Oslo: "...I was raised the traditional Ethiopian way, and I prefer it to the Norwegian way of raising children. Because I was taught to have strong love for my family and relatives, but here they do not have such attachments."

Informant n.5: "...Because children here leave their families at an early age and start living an independent life, they lose most of their attachments and love towards their families."

Informant n.15: "Since childhood, children here learnt that if something is theirs, it is 'only theirs' and they do not have to share that with their brothers or sisters. They grow up like that, being selfish...If you have observed Norwegians rather rely on their government and the system than on family when they need help. For example, whenever a people gets sick or retires, the government takes care of them. But in the case of Ethiopia, sharing with others comes as a rule and necessity, and that practice became part of our culture."

Those immigrants with children are already mixing Ethiopian and Norwegian cultures and applying the so-called Ethio-Norwegian method when raising their children. By implementing

what they consider the positive and rejecting the negative aspects of both cultures, these informants are raising and educating their children in ways that are acceptable to them. Even those informants who did not have children at the time of the interviews, stated that, given the opportunity, they would use similar children's upbringing method.

Informant n. 1: "I think there are positive aspects that can be drawn from both cultures. For instance, I like the Norwegian way of educating children because it gives them more freedom...On the other hand, I like the Ethiopian way because it teaches children to have more discipline and good manners, respect and love for their family."

Informant n.2: "...I do not accept child beating, it is not right. But respecting the children's rights is one thing and put in place certain boundaries is another...I think they do not have enough boundaries in Norway."

Informant n.5: "Since we live here, my daughter will grow within the Norwegian culture, but I will teach her some aspects of the Ethiopian culture as well... I do not mean that Norwegians have no respect for people; it is just that we Ethiopians have more respect and love for our families. For instance, in the future, if I ever need my daughter's help, I do not want her to be careless."

All the informants have made firm decisions of teaching their children Amharic (the official language in Ethiopia) and the Ethiopian history, as part of the necessary and positive aspects of Ethiopian culture. They defend their decisions by explaining that regardless the facts that their children are born or just raised in Norway and will live and learn under the daily basis influence of the Ethnic Norwegian Majority and its cultural influences, these children should still be acquainted with their roots in order to avoid identity crisis when they grow up. In the future, this will give those children the possibility to decide who they see themselves as in the Norwegian society. Children who have learned Amharic can easily communicate with their relatives and other Ethiopians whenever they visit Ethiopia, this gives them the possibility of not feeling isolated due to language barrier.

Informant n.3 has an ethnic Norwegian spouse and two children from that marriage: "My children know that they are Norwegians, but at the same time, they are also proud of being Ethiopians...they have learned Amharic...They have no identity crisis because they have accepted who they are..."

Informant n.12: "...I definitely teach my children Amharic, though they are Norwegian citizens, they still are ethnic Ethiopians, and therefore they should be able to communicate with their grandparents and other relatives when we travel to Ethiopian."

Informant n.17: "...the children should learn Amharic because it is their heritage and identity..."

5.3 Cultural preferences and choices according to ones` personality

All immigrants are aware that there are cultural differences between people of different ethnicities and nationalities. The information gathered from the eighteen informants shows that based on their background, education, experiences, heritage, and etc. immigrants decide to what extent their culture differs from the Norwegian culture, subsequently, their choices of cultural compromises in their daily basis behaviours differ as well.

Informant n.3: "There was a neighbour here whom I hardly knew; when I gave birth to my first son she gave me a big plastic bag full of children's clothing. As I found out later, it is a normal thing to do in the Norwegian culture. Now, what do you think a neighbour in Ethiopia would say if I did that in Ethiopia? There is a cultural clash for you..."

Informant n.16: "...I think when it comes to evaluate what is good and what is bad in a culture, such decision is a personal matter. As long as I feel comfortable doing something, I consider it as good cultural practice..."

All eighteen informants are of the opinion that there is a polarisation between the Ethiopian traditional culture in rural areas and the Norwegian culture. Nevertheless in regards to current Ethiopian culture in urban areas, the informants argue that there are also many aspects of it which are similar with the current Norwegian culture.

Informant n.3 was born and raised in Addis Ababa (the capital city of Ethiopia), her father was a Pilot of Ethiopian Air force and her mother was an accountant in an insurance company. She stated: "...Yes my father was liberal. I could go out whenever I wanted as long as for safety reasons he knew where I was going, that was his basic principle."

Informant n.4: "...We were farmers...I think these two cultures are opposite, we have nothing in common."

Informant n.5: "...If you had recently visited Ethiopia, you would know that in cultural aspects things are not as they were in the past, especially in towns. Women have more rights and are becoming more active in all in job seeking and other activities. So, I think it is a positive direction."

The examination whether the informants preferred the Ethiopian or the Norwegian culture, showed that in regards to personal choices and behaviour, all preferred to apply aspects of both cultures they considered as modern and progressive at the same time did not compromise their worthiness, personality and dignity as Ethiopian women.

Informantn.3: "...I am happy to be able to choose the best of both cultures that can benefit my children and me..."

There are certain cultural barriers that all informants are still learning to overcome. Since cultures are not stagnant and vary with time, places, generations, etc. one can observe that unlike in the near past, individual preferences and behavioural orientation such as homosexuality have become acceptable in the current Norwegian culture. Though all eighteen informants stated such behavioural orientation do not agree with them personally, their culture and their religion, nevertheless they were willing to respect and accept the wishes and behaviours of other individuals, as long as their behaviours are within the Norwegian law and do not infringe upon their individual rights.

Informant n.1: "...For instance, with the case of homosexuality you mentioned as an example of differences in culture, in our culture (traditional Ethiopian culture) it is not acceptable, but I think it is personal and as long as one believes in what one does, it is up to the individual..."

Informant n.2: "...For example, I do not agree with the practice of homosexuality because of personal belief, but then, I do not condemn it as good or bad because it is a personal business. In fact, I know some decent people who are homosexuals."

Informant n.16: "Before I came to Norway and had the opportunity to work with homosexuals, I had negative and biased views of such sexual orientations, but eventually my way of thinking changed towards more positive views, I started looking at such issues from a different perspective..."

Among other things, they condemn and reject the cultural and religious taboos regarding Homosexuality in Ethiopia, as well as the legitimacy of the Ethiopian law that requires a minimum of three years and a maximum ten years jail sentences for people of such sexual orientation. The informants explained that if necessary, they would be able to respect and accept any family member, relative, friend, etc. with what they refer to as non-traditional sexual orientations, though, personally they might not agree with such behavioural orientations.

Mostly, the informants have positive views regarding the intentional and/or unintentional implementations of Norwegian culture in their personal daily basis lives. The unintentional implementations of some aspects of the Norwegian culture appear with time in forms of different social conducts. They have an unwavering support of the Norwegian culture regarding issues such as women's `rights and gender based rights.

Informant n.1: "...I prefer the Norwegian way, because it gives me the possibility to decide for myself what I want to do. But in the case of Ethiopia it is different the family or husband decides for you..."

Informant n.13: "...I could say that I was raised in a modern way and there was no discrimination based on sexes. That is why I do not have any problem to accept the Norwegian culture regarding gender equality."

Some of the informants' choices and actions regarding their personal lives can be considered in total accordance with the Norwegian culture, immigrants can lead such lives knowingly or without realising that their decisions and daily basis actions in their personal lives are based on the culture of the Ethnic Norwegian majority.

5.4 Summary

Immigrants have certain different cultural backgrounds than the ethnic Norwegian majority. Nevertheless the ability and decision to conserve ones culture or trade it for the Norwegian culture or to adopt aspects of both cultures one deems appropriate and useful, differs according to immigrants` individual backgrounds, education, experiences heritage, etc.

Regarding spousal relations within families, there is a contrast between the patriarchal setup of most families in the Ethiopian culture and the spousal relation based on equality and financial independence in the Norwegian culture. Immigrants understand and accept such living arrangements in both cultures as necessities due to certain circumstances.

It is the informants' opinion that Ethiopian and Norwegian cultures have positive as well as negative aspects in regards to children's upbringing. Therefore they choose to apply what they consider as good aspects of both cultures and reject what they regard as bad ones. In doing so, they favour the so-called Ethio-Norwegian practice of raising and educating children.

Again, the informants' cultural based decisions and actions regarding their personal lives within the Norwegian society differ according to individual backgrounds, education, experiences, heritage, etc. Nevertheless, all of them accept the overall Norwegian culture as progressive and are willing to apply it within limits in ways that do not infringe upon (what they consider) positive aspects of the Ethiopian culture. Some of the informants' decisions and daily basis actions are in total accordance with the Norwegian culture.

6. Research findings and analysis of informants' experiences, views and thoughts, regarding their integration within the Norwegian society

This chapter is about the understanding that immigrants relate themselves to the society they live in and its ethnic majority differs according to every person's individual past and current experiences, background, education, culture, heritage, family status etc. In the case of the eighteen informants, their individual understanding of integration in general terms and their understanding of the Norwegian integration policy combined with their individual experiences gives them the possibility to form personal opinions regarding Norway and Ethnic Norwegians. It also enables them to understand in what forms each individual considers herself integrated within the Norwegian society. Such individual deductions can either be 'objective' (related to the reality on the ground), 'quasi-objective' (partially related to the reality on the ground) or 'subjective' (contradicting facts of daily basis life practices). Regardless the objectivity, quasi-objectivity or subjectivity of immigrants` views towards their integration within the society of their host country, these views still determine the orientation of immigrants` psychological integration.

6.1 Informants' views and thoughts regarding integration in a general context

Four of the eighteen informants had never contemplated on the meaning of integration. They even admitted that they did not know the meaning of the word 'integration' because they had never heard of it. These four individuals have limited education and were active within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market at the time of the interviews. If the meaning of integration is to be taken within the context of 'daily basis human interaction', then these individuals regard that it is not important for them to have constant contacts, interactions and relations with the ethnic Norwegian majority in order for them to lead lives in this country.

Informant n.1: "...Integration? I have never heard the word...But, I do not think it is important to interact with Norwegians, because I can live an independent life within my own culture without integration."

Informant n.4: "...Integration? I know nothing about it..."

Fourteen of the eighteen informants defined the meaning of integration in general terms as immigrants` ability and possibility to learn the official language and get acquainted with the

culture of the host country, learn the different functioning systems of that country function in order to know ones rights as well as responsibilities. Immigrants should be able to live in the host society without being discriminated against, stigmatized, ladled and/or undermined because of their ethnicity, culture, country of origin, skin colour, etc. They should be able to practice their cultures and religion not only privately, but publicly as well, as long as such practices are not in contradiction with the laws of the host country.

These fourteen informants regard integration as a necessity for immigrants, in order to enable them to properly function within different spheres of their host society. Because interactions in different forms and on different levels between immigrants and the ethnic majority are inevitable, some form of integration is bound to happen. Therefore it is beneficiary for the well being of all parties and the society as whole, for people to push forward with integration by exploring and strengthening the mechanisms of interaction within a society.

Informant n.2: "I think integration is important...I should know the language and be able to express my needs and make sure that my rights are respected..."

Informant n.5: "My understanding of integration is that I should not frame and restrict myself to my culture, I should accept some aspects of the Norwegian culture that consider useful to me. I should respect that there are people with different cultures...As long as I live here, I should try to integrate as best as I can...I do not believe that I should interact only with Ethiopians, I should be able to have friends of other nationalities too."

Informant n.7: "Integration is when a person learns the Norwegian language and culture at the same time not leaving his/her cultural identity. Me, I take the good cultural practices from both sides...I think every person should decide what he/she considers good cultural practices..."

Informant n.14: "For me, integration means contributing to the system of a country, while retaining my personality and identity at the same time...I believe it is important to integrate, especially when you have family and children here. It gives you the possibility to know more about the culture and the system of the country you live in, and that in turn helps your life to be better."

These informants are of the opinion that integration should be a two ways process. But they believe that such process is slowed down due to lack of effort from the ethnic Norwegian

majority. Unless the ethnic majority of a host country is prepared to understand and accept that immigrants are not some kind of aliens which are to be considered as inferior beings to them, the existence of social harmony within a society will be difficult to achieve. Immigrants' different cultures, background, religion, etc. should be acknowledged and accepted within the host society as long as they are in accordance with the laws of the country. According to the informants, unless such steps of compromises are implemented within the ethnic majority of a country, immigrants' efforts of achieving some form of integration will be futile or have little results at best.

Informant n.2: "...Most of the Norwegians think that it is only the foreigners that should do the effort to integrate. But how can we integrate? Despite our efforts it is obvious that most of them do not let us do it."

Informant n.5: "Integration should be from both sides, I should learn about them and they should learn about me..."

Informant n.9: "I think integration should be from both sides...In my view, Norwegians are exerting good efforts in trying to understand our culture and give it due respect."

Informant n.14: "For me, integration must be from both sides. Because I see integration as accepting each others identities and work for the same goals of developing the country...Norwegians should give better opportunities to foreigners in order to see people integrated practically."

Informant n.15: "I think integration must be from both sides, but the Norwegians do not exert enough effort, they do not seem interested...In my opinion, most of them believe that, as long as foreigners come to their rich land to use all the potential opportunities and resources, it is up to them to learn the language and get integrated. On the other hand, I do not think they really want us to come and be part of the society."

6.2 Informants `understanding of the Norwegian integration policy

In regards to the understanding of the current Norwegian integration policy, the previously mentioned four informants who had never contemplated on the meaning of integration stated that they were unfamiliar with the integration policy and that they never bothered to enquire its contents. But if integration entails the way that the Norwegian authorities expect immigrants to live and function in the society, then the interpretation of these informants is

that immigrants are expected to live and behave like ethnic Norwegians. Consequently, these informants understand the Norwegian integration policy overall as a concept of assimilation.

Informant n.1: "I do not know what the Norwegian integration policy is, but it seems to me that they want us to follow their own way of life."

Informant n.10: "I think that the Norwegians want us to fully endorse and accept their culture, and live like them..."

The rest fourteen informants understand the Norwegian integration policy slightly differently. According to them, one cannot help having the impression that the Norwegian authorities are hoping for possible assimilation of immigrants. In concrete terms, to them, the policy entails learning the Norwegian language, becoming self-sufficient and self-reliant, by being structurally integrated in the society.

Informant n.2: "...I think they want us to study their language and be able to work."

In formant n.11: "They expect us to learn their culture and language so we could be independent... Sometimes I feel as if they expect us to be like them, I believe it is a combination of ignorance and arrogance..."

Informant n.12: "...They consider you integrated as long as you work and are economically independent. They consider only the materialistic aspects of integration and not the social ones..."

6.3 Informants' choices of psychological integration

Whether immigrants consider themselves integrated within their host society depends on individual experiences, education, backgrounds, heritage, etc. Whether they wish and plan to live the rest of their lives in their host country, or move out of the country one day, depends on their individual experiences during their stay in that country.

6.3.1 Informants who do not consider themselves integrated

A familiar pattern emerges in regards to the informants `choices of psychological integration. The previously mentioned four immigrants do not consider themselves as being integrated within the Norwegian society, even though the reality on the ground shows that they are structurally and culturally integrated in certain forms. These informants were only able to

associate integration solely with social interaction between immigrants and ethnic Norwegians. As a result, the fact of their participation within the Norwegian labour market and their voluntary and/or involuntary practices of the Norwegian culture in their daily basis lives were not put into consideration, thus making their views 'subjective'.

Based on their understanding of 'integration', it is irrelevant to these immigrants whether they are integrated or not within the Norwegian society. It is not their purpose to achieve some form of integration in order to lead their lives as they deem fit in Norway. They are not interested in different political, economic or social events and changes that constantly occur in the society they live in. These four immigrants with limited education, who came to Norway as asylum seekers and not as voluntary migrants are more interested in different events within the political and economic spheres of their country of origin (Ethiopia) which they were forced to flee for certain reasons.

Informant n.1: "...I do not follow the politics here; I do not have any idea of the political parties and who is in them...I do not follow the news because it does not interest me."

Informant n.4: "I have never thought about integration, it is not something that is important to me..."

Informant n.6: "...No, I have never thought about integration and I have tried to integrate..."

Based mostly on lack or limited of experiences regarding constant interactions with ethnic Norwegians majority, these informants developed negative views towards this country and its ethnic Norwegian majority. Based on their current views, they made it clear that their ultimate loyalty lies not with Norway but with Ethiopia, and given the right circumstances, they would return to what they consider their real country, because they would not wish to spend the rest of their lives within the Norwegian society.

Informant n.1: "I am not happy here; I do not know the exact reason why...Yes I want to return to my country one day..."

Informant n.4: "I think of Norwegians as superficial hypocrites and a closed society. I believe they see us as stupid or unintelligent and they think of us as inferior to them...One day, I want to go back, because I am an Ethiopian and Norway is not my country even tough I hold a Norwegian citizenship. I want to spend the rest of my life in my country where I will be respected..."

Informant n.6: "I think that most of the Norwegians are racists. The majority of the Norwegians consist of bad people and only a few good ones..."

Informant n.10: "...No, I can not imagine living my whole life here. I would like to live among my own people, within my culture... You can say that I have all the necessary things here, but I do not have the satisfaction that I would have in my home country."

6.3.2 Informants who consider themselves partially integrated

In comparison, fourteen of the eighteen informants consider themselves partially integrated within the Norwegian society. These immigrants `views are based on their experiences of certain forms of structural integration and social interactions with ethnic Norwegians, as well as voluntary and/or involuntary cultural integration.

If one is to examine these informants `understanding of integration as a concept and compare it to the reality of the ground, it is clear that they are fully integrated. Nevertheless the informants contradict themselves by making arguments that they are only partially integrated within the Norwegian society. This is due to the fact that they subconsciously relate their integration with the Norwegian integration policy, and associate with the concept of 'assimilation', thus making their views regarding their integration within the Norwegian society 'quasi-objective'.

Informant n.2: "...It is a difficult question. But, I can say that I have integrated partially."

Informant n.5: "...I can say that I am not fully integrated, because I am not living my life the way the Norwegians expect us to. There are some aspects of my culture that I want to retain...You can say that I do not want to be fully integrated..."

Informant n.15: "I do not feel fully integrated because I do not speak the Norwegian language fluently."

Based on their overall experiences regarding different forms of structural, social and cultural integration, the fourteen informants mostly have positive views and opinions of their host country and its ethnic Norwegian majority. Because they feel and regard themselves as part of the Norwegian society, they developed constant and active interests in the developments of the political and economic arenas of this country. According to them, since any kind changes within a society have indiscriminate effects on all the people living within that society, it is up

to all individuals to follow and try to actively participate in shaping those changes in ways they consider beneficiary for themselves as well as that society. Voting during local, municipal or national elections is seen by them as one of the methods of being part of the Norwegian society.

Informant n.2: "Yes, I often watch news and read newspapers, because I need to be informed on what goes on in the country I live in. I believe things that happen here concern me too...I do vote, because I have the right and I want to exercise that right...I think those political parties that do not support foreigners are increasing, because we foreigners do not participate in elections...I also take into consideration other things when I vote, such as the rights for workers..."

Informant n.3: "I am happy with my life and the status I have in the Norwegian society...Yes, there are some racists here, but then, there are equally racists in Africa. We both know that there are some Ethiopians who are racists. So, Norway is not worse than other countries in that regards..."

Informant n.7: "...Of course I vote, I support parties that have favourable views towards foreigners...I rarely watch television because of my tight work schedule, but I get information on what is happening here through internet...I have a positive attitude towards Norwegians in general...I could say that I am happy with my life her, I believe that I have achieved what I had aimed for."

Informant n.8: "I vote because it concerns my life...I watch the news and other Norwegian programs, because I want to be informed and understand what is happening here and around the World."

Informant n.14: "In general I am quite happy with my life here. But sometimes I feel that I am considered as a second rate citizen..."

Informant n.16: "...When I vote, I primarily look at what each party has to offer in terms of jobs and education development, rather that whether it favours foreigners."

Informant n.17: "I vote, and once I even was one of the election observant in my county...Whether a party is in favour of foreigners or not is not a major criteria for me...I view Norwegians as citizens who have good as well as bad qualities, as in any other society, they are no exception."

Nevertheless, the loyalties of these informants to their host society are limited compared to their country of origin. Though for different reasons which are not related to those given by the four informants mentioned earlier, twelve of the fourteen informants would Move out of Norway if given the right circumstances. The majority of tem show the whish to live close to their relatives as reason for wanting to leave this country one day in the future. Only two informants stated that they would not mind spending the rest of their lives in Norway.

Informant n.2: "I know for sure that I do not want to live here the rest of my life, because it is not my country...I always think about my relatives in Ethiopia..."

Informant n.5: "...I am okay with Norway and I think it is here that I am going to live the rest of my life."

Informant n.7: "No, I would not want to live the rest of my life here. I want to go back home and live close to my family."

Informant n.11: "I have plans to move back home (Ethiopia), in fact I am waiting for certain things to happen in order to proceed with the moving process..."

Informant n.14: "...It is my dream to go and serve my country with my profession in the near future."

6.4 Summary

The concepts of 'integration' as well as 'the Norwegian integration policy' are understood and interpreted differently based on a person's individual experiences, background, education, heritage, etc. The findings reveal that informants with some form of higher education and those with constant access to social interaction with the ethnic Norwegian majority have a broader and better understanding of the Norwegian culture than those individuals with limited educational background. The cases of the eighteen informants revealed that four immigrants with limited education who are active within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market, basically have never contemplated on the subject of integration prior to the interviews and subsequently had no opinion on the matter. The remaining fourteen informants had an overall common view regarding the concept of integration, which can be related to 'multiculturalism', while their understanding of the Norwegian integration policy can be related to 'assimilation'.

Four of the eighteen informants who have limited educational background and participate in the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market, have limited access of social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. Their cases showed that immigrants' views can be 'subjective' based on lack and or limitation of certain experiences, thus contradicting the reality on the ground. Subjectivity is accompanied by negative views and opinions towards the host country and its ethnic majority, subsequently leading to lack of psychological integration in forms of loyalty and patriotism.

Reality on the ground shows that, in relation to the informants' interpretation of the concept of integration which happens to be similar to multiculturalism, fourteen of the eighteen informants are integrated within the Norwegian society. Nevertheless, they perceive themselves as being integrated only in certain aspects, because they subconsciously relate the concept of their integration within the Norwegian society, with the Norwegian integration policy, which they understand more or less as 'assimilation'. Thus, their views can be referred to as 'quasi-objective'. To some extent, these immigrants are psychologically integrated in forms of certain amount of patriotism and loyalty to their host country and its ethnic Norwegian majority.

7. Discussion on Findings

Although the term 'multiculturalism' is rarely used when the topic of integration is publicly and officially discussed in Norway, I decided to set the Norwegian integration policy in terms of multiculturalism's perspectives.

The current integration policy implemented by the Norwegian policy makers has features of what would be described by Hall (2000:210) as liberal multiculturalism which seeks to integrate individuals from various cultures toward values of Norwegian citizenship and allows immigrants'/minorities' cultural practices to take place in private.

The Norwegian integration policy has also some features of what Walzer calls 'liberalism 2' or what is referred to as 'social democratic' reformist programs of Europe supporting the acknowledgement of some group rights as well as defined group rights and the public recognition and reflection of the differentiated social needs and cultural diversity of all of its citizens by a state. Following such policy, it would be the state's responsibility to ensure the development of redistributive public support strategies in forms of confirmatory action programs, there must be a legislation that gives all the legal inhabitants of the country equal opportunities in all spheres of that society, benefits that assist all disadvantaged groups and the financial support of compensatory grants (Hall: 231). In addition, the authorities would have to redefine existing 'norms' by legalizing certain exceptions based on cultural grounds, such as arranged marriages practiced by some minority groups (if such arrangements are of consent by all parties involved, not infringing any person's individual rights in form of coercion. In addition, the people to be married must be of legal age according to the law of the country) and allowing Muslim female students to wear headscarf in classes (op. cit.).

The study revealed that, when it comes to immigrants' education and choices of participation in the Norwegian labour market, the Norwegian integration policy's provided assistance is limited to Norwegian language courses and some forms of short-termed, practical courses. It is as if it is the intention of the policy makers to integrate immigrants in the 'manual labour' sector as quickly as possible. If the Norwegian authorities bothered to look deeper into the lives of immigrants, they would see realise that most of the immigrants who are working in the so called 'manual labour' sectors would like to get some kind of higher education in order to better their lives. Nevertheless, the majority of these immigrants are not able to accomplish

their wish due to different factors, such as the different type of backgrounds that can be attributed to different immigrants and can either hinder by discouraging or enable by encouraging the later to get some form of higher education in Norway. The immigrant's family life style and/or educational background in their country of origin can also determine whether or not the immigrant will have enough incentive and encouragement to get some form of higher education or choose to be active within the labour market while living in Norway.

As Hall (2000:223-224) put it, if the authorities of a country (in this case Norway) recognise and accept that it is a multicultural nation, it is inadequate to impose the framework of the ethnic majority on other minority groups. Subsequently, extra assistance for immigrants and other disadvantaged groups wishing to acquire some form of higher education should be implemented within the framework of a new state policy. The study confirms the Djuve and Hagen (1995, Fafo-rapport: 184) that the current understanding of equality was initially developed solely for the ethnic Norwegian majority with the consideration of their common culture, values, living conditions.

The economic situation of the immigrant's family in the country of origin can probably be considered as another factor. If immigrants choose to start working and send part of their earnings to their relatives as soon as possible and for as long as needed, it will be very difficult for them to be able to get better education that would allow them to get a better job and better quality of life in their host country. This finding is in accordance to Hall (2000:221)'s argument that even families from same minority groups differ in their structure as well as forms of relationships between the family members. To remedy such situations the Norwegian government can follow the example of other countries by setting up educational programmes where people who work during day time could attend evening courses. Like in France, if needed, the Norwegian authorities could provide individuals with free household help during their attendance of evening classes.

It is difficult for some immigrants to trust, accept and explore the assistance offered by the system of the host country and be able to pursue further studies in order to better themselves. It is common knowledge that the Norwegian system provides any individual who has the capability and motivation to study, with partial scholarships as well as partial loans. For some immigrants the mere thought of having to take a partial loan is seen as a negative thing that can not be trusted, therefore unacceptable. It shows that such immigrants have not yet

mentally come to terms with the fact that it is acceptable to take loans for certain purposes, because that is the way the system of the Norwegian society is built and functions.

Negative and pessimistic information and advices from some Ethiopians and/or other foreigners who have already settled can also lead to the hindrance of immigrants' integration. Such advices might be based on hearsays that may or may not correspond to the actual situation on the ground, nevertheless immigrants who had plans to make changes in their lives tend to be influenced and give up on their intentions and dreams without even trying.

As the study showed, immigrants with limited education who come to Norway as asylum seekers are especially easily influenced by such individuals and tend to develop subjective views towards the Norwegian society. The psychological detachment of such immigrants towards their host country can be attributed among other things to the fact that for certain reasons they were forced to flee their country of origin and migrate to Norway as asylum seekers with the hope of getting refugee statuses. These individuals are not voluntary migrants and though they might not relate to their host country and its ethnic majority, they do not have many choices but to keep on living in that country at least for a certain period of time. Some of these immigrants are known to leave Norway and move (back) to their country of origin or some other country when circumstances allow them to do so.

Most of these immigrants develop resentment towards their host society. Such resentments on their behalf, no matter whether justly founded or not, lead to their constant tendency of separating themselves from the ethnic Norwegian majority (which they regard as 'the others'), subsequently creating a form of self-labelling, self-stigmatisation and self-seclusion, as well as the labelling, stigmatisation and alienation of the ethnic Norwegian majority. Contrary to Kymlicka (1997:69)'s statement, these immigrants' institutional integration did not lead to most of them towards identificational integration with time.

The study also contradicts Kymlicka (1997:70)'s argument that immigrants who come to a country as refugees or asylum seekers become patriotic to their host country. On the contrary, because such group of immigrants did not leave their countries of origin voluntarily, they remain mostly focused on their countries of origin and the people they left behind.

In contrast, it can be argued that individuals with above high school educational background and/or who migrated to Norway voluntarily, especially as result of marriage to Norwegian

men tend to have more objective and more understanding views and opinions towards their host country and its ethnic majority. The individuals who migrated voluntarily have experiences of migration then settling in this country which differ form those who migrated as asylum seekers. They freely chose to come and settle in this country, therefore, they mostly tend to focus on parts of their lives in the Norwegian society they consider as positive and fruitful.

Another factor hindering some immigrants from experiencing interaction with the ethnic Norwegian majority is related to their forms of participation within the Norwegian labour market. Because of their limited education the immigrants have no options but to be active within the 'manual labour' sector. Due to the fact that there are very few ethnic Norwegians in such labour sectors, the immigrants are unable to have close and constant access to them at their places of employment. Gordon (1964:235) refers to such outcomes as 'structural separation'. In addition, the findings are in agreement with Djuve and Hagen (1995) that immigrants who get some form of higher education have more choices of work that can enable them to interact more closely with ethnic Norwegians, though the acquirement of education does not always secure the immigrants' acceptance as equals by the later. The study is in agreement with Helleland and Hansen (2008) that even within the educational systems of Western countries there is occasional existence of stereotyping and stigmatization of immigrant students.

Most of the immigrants working within the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market, might falsely show happy faces in their daily lives to ethnic Norwegians; nevertheless, deep in their hearts, most of them are unhappy with their jobs and feel that they could achieve more if it was not for certain circumstances related to their background or some other factors in their lives.

Though, some immigrants working in the 'manual labour' sector give up and accept it as their faith to work and live (as they see it) at a lower level compared to Ethnic Norwegians, as they do not expect their situation to change without some kind of change in the Norwegian integration policy. Such conditions sometimes lead the immigrants to view ethnic Norwegians as being in more favourable positions in life than them. These immigrants view themselves as individuals who are part of a system that gives them limited opportunity to better their lives. If there is some unspoken notion among the ethnic Norwegian majority that immigrants, especially those who come from developing countries (in this case Ethiopia, where usually

everyone is assumed poor) should be thankful and content with what they have in this country and stop complaining and demanding for more from the Norwegian authorities, that is a mistake. No matter who they are or where they come from, most humans are not stagnant when it comes to one's wish of acquiring knowledge and bettering oneself, otherwise, all of us would probably be still living in the Stone Age. Therefore, with some form of additional encouragement and stimulating assistance from the Norwegian government could remedy such immigrants' situation. There is lack of a more 'aggressive' minority policy which can compensate immigrants/minorities' disadvantages over the ethnic Norwegian majority by giving the immigrants/minorities access to 'equal rights' in reality (Djuve and Hagen, 1995).

Based on the grievances of the majority of the informants, two different arguments can be drawn:

1. Based on the informants' views and opinions regarding their host country and its ethnic Norwegian majority, there seem to be a contrast between the Norwegian policy makers aim to put their country on the international map as a 'humanitarian super power' and the non-readiness of most ethnic Norwegians, who find it difficult to really accept individuals as people based on their individualities, regardless their culture, background, country of origin or skin colour.

The effects of the Norwegian integration policy on the informants, lead to their belief that although certain progressive forces within the Norwegian politics realise that multiculturalism is the only adequate option for a future harmonious Norwegian society, the majority of ethnic Norwegians seem not to be educated deeply enough on the meaning, 'all people are equal'. This raises the issue that the Norwegian integration policy neglects to take into account the fact that it is very difficult to achieve any form of social integration if there is even the slightest labelling and stigmatization of immigrants the ethnic Majority. The presence of such issues in this country confirms the argument by Hall (2000), that most of the majorities of Western countries make a distinction between themselves and immigrants. The introduction of anti-discriminatory law alone has little results if mechanisms in forms of long-term structural strategies and practices dealing with inequality are not introduced (Vasta, 2009:31).

2. Some immigrants tend to stigmatize, label and generalise the behaviour of ethnic Norwegians based on their limited experiences of interaction with them, or even worse, based on their lack of such experiences. If an immigrant is unfortunate enough to cross paths with

few members of the ethnic Norwegian society who can be categorised as racists or xenophobes does it make it adequate for him/her to base his/her opinion of the majority ethnic Norwegians based on his/her individual experiences? The answer is 'absolutely not', because, the study shows that there are certain immigrants with positive experiences of interaction with ethnic Norwegians and can counter the negative views and opinions regarding the ethnic Norwegian majority as whole.

In regards to cultural integration, according to the findings some of the behaviours that the informants attribute to the Norwegian culture such as travelling with the children, respecting the space of other individuals, not talking loudly in public areas, sharing domestic activities, etc. are practiced by most of these informants themselves. Whether the informants behaved in such manners starting form their country of origin, or they had a change of behaviour after living for some period of time in Norway depends on the each individual.

When immigrants are able to realise and acknowledge that no culture is perfect and that even the culture of their country of origin is not without flaws, then their acceptance of certain cultural behaviours of the ethnic majority of the host country is seen as option. In turn, the ethnic majority of the host country has to understand and know that they might be different in certain aspects, but that does not make them better than immigrants. Regardless of their ethnicity and country of origin, people should comprehend that mostly no culture is perfect.

Hekmann (2004:19)'s argument that the processes of cultural integration affect immigrants as well as the ethnic Norwegian society thus lead to social integration, can be considered only partially true, because the study showed that immigrants can be culturally integrated while having very limited social interaction with ethnic Norwegians. Nevertheless, as stated above, the findings show that other factors are more likely to open the path for social integration. Immigrants who have some form of higher education and whose work is related to their education have more opportunities for constant and close social interaction with ethnic Norwegians.

Immigrants have different understanding of integration. Due to limited educational backgrounds some immigrants fail to contemplate on the meaning of integration in a general context, as well as on the Norwegian integration policy. Immigrants who have certain views on integration seem to view this issue in forms of what Hall (2000:210) refers to as liberal

multiculturalism and most of them understand the Norwegian integration policy as a form of assimilation which they tend to reject.

The fact that immigrants lack the knowledge and information when it comes to the concept of integration and do not have a clear understanding of the Norwegian integration policy, demonstrates that there are weaknesses in certain areas of that policy because it fails to properly inform and educate immigrants (especially those who come from developing countries) on such important issues.

Complete identificational (psychological) integration of immigrants (especially those from developing countries) tends to fail not only because of their limited or total lack of knowledge regarding the concept of integration and the Norwegian integration policy, but also due to their daily experiences within the Norwegian society. This brings us back to the issues of immigrants `perceptions of how they fit in the host society and their views and opinions regarding the ethnic Norwegian majority, which are based on their experiences or lack of certain experiences. The study shows that the Norwegian integration policy does not adequately address the crucial issues of educating ethnic Norwegians as well as all immigrants about each other, the different concepts and forms of integration, and the real and practical meaning of viewing, respecting and treating other human beings as equals while at the same time taking into consideration the possible differences in gender, ethnicity, culture form of education and background. Because of an inadequate integration policy, some groups of immigrants are perceived as not integrating (kymlicka, 1997), subsequently leading to the revival of racism (Hall, 2000).

The study also shows that the Norwegian authorities do not take enough consideration of Kymlicka (1997)'s suggestion that a government must be able to implement new programs that would help immigrants to shift their focus from their past to their future in their host society.

8. Conclusion to the Thesis

The objective of the study was, by using a qualitative research method to look into the lives of eighteen Ethiopian immigrant women living in Oslo and assess what effects did (and still does) the Norwegian integration policy have on their daily lives. The purpose was to find out how such policy shaped each of these women's individual experiences, views and opinions in regards to the forms of their structural, social, cultural and identificational integration within the Norwegian society. As a result of the findings the following conclusion is drawn:

Based on the informants' experiences, views and opinions it can be argued that the possibility of learning the Norwegian language as part of the Norwegian integration policy is a positive step that can facilitate some form of structural as well as social integration. But when it comes to some immigrants' willingness to acquire some for of higher education in order to change their lives for the better, assistance for such purposes is not within the framework of the Norwegian integration policy. The policy is structured in a way only to recognise these individuals as 'immigrants' by offering them assistance up to a limited basic level. By bluntly applying the big slogan "equality for everyone", as part of the Norwegian integration policy, the authorities actually deny "equal opportunities for everyone" in practice by ignoring the unequal 'jumpstart' between immigrants and the ethnic Norwegian majority.

Whether or not immigrants who live in Norway have access to the experiences of some form of close and constant social interaction with ethnic Norwegians depends on different factors, such as the causes for their migration, the forms of their structural integration, family status and their choices of religious or social networks.

Immigrants with limited education working in the 'manual sector' within the Norwegian labour market have views and opinions regarding ethnic Norwegians based on hearsay and limited experiences of interaction with the later. In contrast, immigrants with some form of higher education base their views and opinions on social integration in accordance to their individual experiences of interaction with ethnic Norwegians within the Norwegian educational system and/or the labour market. In such cases different experiences can lead to immigrants' negative as well as positive views regarding their host country and its ethnic Norwegian majority. Overall, while those immigrants working in the 'manual labour' sector view the ethnic Norwegian majority negatively, most of the immigrants with some form of higher education have mostly positive views and opinions of the society they live in.

Concerning the notion of immense and uncompromising cultural differences, especially between immigrants from developing countries and the ethnic Norwegian majority, the study shows that there are no impenetrable barriers. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that all immigrants of different ethnicities and nationalities have different ways of life. Mostly, those features that can be attributed as cultures of one country can not be identically attributed to other countries. There are also certain differences of cultural behaviours within urban and rural areas, as well as within different families in developing countries.

It can be argued that immigrants' choices regarding the forms of their cultural integration in the Norwegian society are based on the culture of their country of origin as well as their personal cultural experiences. In regards to Ethiopian immigrant women, the study showed that most of them embrace a big portion of the Norwegian culture and are willing to live in this country with certain cultural compromises they deem fit for them and their families.

The study revealed that the lack of adequate information and education on the issue of integration as a concept in general and the Norwegian integration policy, leads to some immigrants inability to realise that they are integrated in some forms within the society of their host country. Immigrants `failure to understand and acknowledge their integration in certain forms is one of the reasons why they can be driven to consider themselves as not being part of Norway and its society. Thus, the feeling of being outsiders sets in, forcing the immigrants to try and find some sort of psychological comfort by relating their thoughts and in practices, to their country of origin.

It should be noted that it was not the aim of this study to access the views and behaviour of the ethnic Norwegian majority towards immigrants. Neither should the gathered results be generalised to all immigrant women from developing countries living in Norway, because the data was provided by a 'limited' number of 'female' informants from a 'particular' country of origin, thus can not be perceived as 100% representative of all immigrants. A combination of different similar studies addressing a wider range of issues regarding the integration of immigrants within the Norwegian society would provide patterns and differences on a more general scale.

Recommendation

Based on the results of this study, one is forced to face the fact that the current Norwegian integration policy does not address certain issues that would lead immigrants towards certain form of sustainable integration within the society they live in. Therefore, personally being a supporter of 'liberal multiculturalism', I further take upon myself to make a few and brief recommendations to all concerned parties regarding some of the steps that can be taken to drive the Norwegian society towards 'liberal multiculturalism' as its adequate form of integration policy in the near future.

The majority of immigrants with limited education who work in the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market do not have the kind of access to the ethnic Norwegian majority that will enable them to form views and opinions regarding the society they live in based on individual experiences. In order to overcome such obstacles and difficulties associated with social interaction between ethnic Norwegians and immigrants who migrate to Norway as (especially) asylum seekers, as result of family reunion, or married to Ethiopian men permanently residing in this country, the Norwegian authorities have to come up with some ideas and programs that would enable such group of immigrants and ethnic Norwegians to have closer social interactions in some form of networks, which will give all parties the opportunity and possibility to gain more knowledge and better understanding of one another. Already, a Non Governmental Organisation such as The Norwegian Red Cross has put in place a program that facilitates the possibility of interaction between immigrants and ethnic Norwegians.

If Norway is to be a country where it is expected and accepted that the majority of the immigrants (especially those from developing countries) should work mostly within the country's 'manual labour' sector, the Norwegian authorities and the society can keep on ignoring or minimising the significance of the negative feelings, views and attitudes towards this country which are generated among some immigrants working in those sectors.

On the other hand the Norwegian authorities can come up with new integration policies and programs that would assist immigrants who are willing, but for different reasons are unable to get some form of higher education. Such programs could include assisting these immigrants financially and/or aim to encourage them through some form of future incentives as well as to provide better and deeper education regarding their host society.

Unless such steps are taken as part of a reformed Norwegian integration policy, there will inevitably be a period in the Norwegian history when the majority of immigrants who are active in the 'manual labour' sector of the Norwegian labour market will feel helpless and denied of fair opportunities. These individuals will have the feeling and belief that they are regarded by most of ethnic Norwegians as inferiors and unworthy. Subsequently such cases lead to the immigrants' practical and/or psychological separation from the ethnic Norwegian majority and self-seclusion.

The Norwegian authorities can make it their aim for this country to become a power that proudly stands out for its high number of highly educated and inhabitants of different ethnicities and nationalities who are employed according their specialities. Norway can be a leading example and a role model for other Western countries on how adequate immigrants' education can serve as one of the steps facilitating integration. As a country, it can demonstrate how extra assistance and encouragement to immigrants seeking to acquire higher education can lead to more positive opportunities and willingness for interaction between such immigrants and ethnic Norwegians.

There should be no worries that such conditions might lead to shortage of 'manpower' in the 'manual labour' sector, because of the existence of some immigrants working in those sectors who have happily accepted their work and their way of life in this country, without any kind of resentment towards the rest of the society. In Addition, there will always be migrant workers who apply and come to work within such sectors of Norway's labour market, with the purpose of earning needed money and returning to the countries they came from at the end of their working contracts.

In order for the majority of immigrants (especially those who migrated from developing countries) and ethnic Norwegians to coexist and interact in harmony, the Norwegian integration policy should come up with new programs that educate all involved parties on how to apply in practice the belief and theory that 'all people are equal' and should be given not only 'equal' but 'fair' opportunities as well.

The teaching of people's equality regardless their ethnicity, background, culture or education should be implemented in some forms of teaching programs in schools for children as well as their parents, where they could learn to view any given person, first and foremost as an 'individual' and not as a person of different ethnicity, culture, religion or country of origin.

The Norwegian authorities should stop generalising and addressing all immigrants from developing countries as a 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' issue. In addition, as part of an improved integration policy it should be made clear to all people within the Norwegian society that similar to ethnic Norwegians, immigrants can have different educational, social or economic backgrounds and that every person's contribution to the Norwegian society is of equal value for the prosperity and well-being of this country.

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Informant number	Age (years)	Religion	Education in Ethiopia	Occupation in Ethiopia	Cause of migration to Norway	Time of stay in Norway	Additional education in Norway	Number of jobs since moving to Norway	Current occupation	Civil status	Number of children in Norway	Number of close Ethnic Norwegian friends in Norway	Close Ethiopian friends in Norway	Number of close friends of other ethnicities
1	23	Orthodox Christian	Elementary school	Student	Asylum seeker	7	Completed secondary school	3	Kitchen assistant	Single	-	-	3	-
2	44	Orthodox Christian	11 th grade	Student	Family reunion	26	Physiotherapy, 3 years	9	Self employed	Married	3	2	6	2
3	44	Buddhist	Secondary school+1 year	Electrician	Married to an Ethnic Norwegian	13	Bachelor in Business and Administration	4	Human resources &administration officer	Married to ethnic Norwegian	2	6	2	3
4	24	Orthodox Christian	6 th grade	Farmer	Asylum seeker	8	Completed 8 th grade	1	Janitor	Married	1	-	2	-
5	25	Orthodox Christian	High school graduate	Self employed	Asylum seeker	9	Cook	3	Maternity leave	Single	1	3	10	4
6	39	Pentecost Christian	High school graduate	Secretary	Married to an Ethiopian	19	Norwegian language level 3 & 5 months of computer course	3	Janitor	Married	2	-	7	-
7	28	Orthodox Christian	10 th grade	Student	Asylum seeker	13	Nursing	4	Nurse	Single	-	2	2	1
8	37	Catholic Christian	High school graduate	Family business	Married to an Ethiopian	16	Norwegian language level 3	6	Unemployed	Divorced	1	3	10	4
9	23	Orthodox Christian	Completed elementary school	Student	Asylum seeker	7	High school+3 years nurse assistant	3	Nurse assistant	Married	-	2	4	3
10	24	Orthodox Christian	8 th grade	Student	Asylum seeker	6	Norwegian language level 3	3	Look after people in nursing home	Married	-	-	9	-
11	35	Orthodox Christian	10 th grade	student	Asylum seeker	17	2 nd year Masters student	7	"Public Health" student	Married	1	5	9	2
12	34	Orthodox Christian	University 1 year	Receptionist	Asylum seeker	11	Nursing	5	Nurse	Married	2	-	3	-
13	28	Orthodox Christian	High school	Student	Asylum seeker	6	3 rd year Bachelor student	3	Student	Single	-	3	12	2
14	45	Orthodox Christian	High school graduate	Sales person	Asylum seeker	21	Nursing	9	Nurse	Married to Ethnic Norwegian	2	5	6	2
15	32	Muslim	Bachelor in Statistics	Statistician	Married to an Ethiopian	7	PhD student	4	'Statistics' student	Divorced	-	-	3	2
16	32	Orthodox Christian	1 year "College of Commerce"	Student	Married to an Ethiopian	13	Norwegian language, computer & secretary courses	6	Secretary	Divorced	1	4	4	-
17	49	Muslim	Diploma from "College of Commerce"	Accountant	Asylum seeker	15	Accounting courses	3	Accountant	Married	3	4	2	-
18	35	Born Again Christian	High school graduate	Travel office agent	Asylum seeker	12	Nursing	2	Nurse	Married	2	-	3-4 families	-

Table 1. Brief overview of the informants