



Norwegian University
of Life Sciences

Master's Thesis 2017 30 ECTS
The Faculty of Landscape and Society

The Importance of Work for Highly Educated Refugees in Norway

Elina Gobeti
International Development

The Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragric, is the international gateway for the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU). Established in 1986, Noragric's contribution to international development lies in the interface between research, education (Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes) and assignments.

The Noragric Master theses are the final theses submitted by students in order to fulfil the requirements under the Noragric Master programme "International Environmental Studies", "International Development Studies" and "International Relations".

The findings in this thesis do not necessarily reflect the views of Noragric. Extracts from this publication may only be reproduced after prior consultation with the author and on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation contact Noragric.

© Elina Gobeti, August 2017
elinagobeti@gmail.com

Noragric
Department of International Environment and Development Studies
The Faculty of Landscape and Society
P.O. Box 5003
N-1432 Ås
Norway
Tel.: +47 67 23 00 00
Internet: <https://www.nmbu.no/fakultet/landsam/institutt/noragric>

Declaration

I, (name), 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.....

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank my professor and supervisor, William Derman. I am beyond grateful for not only your guidance and advice throughout the research, but for your kindness, support, and inspiration. I truly appreciate the possibility to have you as my supervisor and professor. I want to thank the Department of International Environment and Development Studies and study coordinator, Ingunn Bohmann for the support throughout these years. Along with that, I want to thank advisors at the Writing Center, and the Student Information Center for the help and assistance during the years at NMBU. I am truly lucky to have met so many remarkable people during my years at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, and will forever cherish the kindness and support. My years here, at NMBU, are no doubt the most enriching years of my academic journey. Thank you, Noragric.

Abstract

In 2016, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security highlighted the importance of refugee participation in labor in several reports. The ministry stresses the dependency of the Norwegian welfare model on high tax revenue, and argues that it is very important for adult refugees to work. In order to increase employment rates among the refugee population, and decrease number of dependents on social benefits, the Introduction Program was implemented in 2006. This was followed by the tightening of migration policies for obtaining asylum in Norway. However, the employment rate among refugee population is low, with less than a half of overall population with a refugee background working. Along with that, there is no specified numbers on how many refugees with a higher education work within the profession. This thesis aims to explore whether highly educated individuals with a refugee background in Norway work within the profession and to listen to their experiences of seeking relevant employment. Seven individuals with a refugee background and higher education aged between 24 and 52 were interviewed. The study reveals that none of the seven interviewees works within their chosen professions. However, only one interviewee believes that his inability to find a skilled job is related to prejudices or discrimination, while other respondents name other reasons. The main tendency is that interviewees who came to Norway as adult have more negative experiences, than those who came to Norway in childhood. Using the work of Erikson and Maslow I explore if, inability to work within the profession negatively affects self-esteem and everyday life of older interviewees, while having a lesser effect on younger interviewees.

Contents

Acknowledgments.....	1
Abstract.....	2
1. Introduction	5
1.1. Problem Statement.....	6
1.2. Research questions and objectives.....	7
2. Background	9
2.1. Asylum Seekers and migration in Norway	9
2.2. Refugees and the Labor Market.....	14
2.3. Dignity in the context of the right to work.....	17
3. Conceptual and theoretical framework.....	19
3.1. Erik Erikson’s Stages of Life	20
3.2. Abraham Maslow’s “Motivation and Personality”	31
3.3. Critiques of Erikson and Maslow	37
4. Methodology.....	40
4.1. Narrative research method	40
4.2. Limitations of the method	40
4.3. Sampling	40
4.4. Semi-structured interviews	41
4.5. Ethical concerns	41
4.6. Secondary data	41
4.7. Researcher’s positioning.....	42
4.8. Limitations of the research.....	42
5. Findings	43
5.1. Background stories	43
5.2 RQ1. Do highly educated adults with a refugee background find jobs relevant to their education?.....	48
5.3. RQ2: Do highly educated adults feel that refugee background affects employers will to hire them?.....	53
5.4. RQ3. How important is a profession to educated adults with a refugee background?	66
5.5. Gratitude to Norway.....	70
5.6. Cultural identity.....	71
5.7. Gender.....	72
5.8. Family and marriage	73

6. Discussion.....	75
6. 1. Employment status and challenges.....	75
6.2. Prejudices towards refugees in Norway	78
6.3. Identity, self-esteem and the importance of profession and meaningful job in life.....	80
6.3.1. Erik Erikson’s Theory of Life Cycles.....	80
6.3.2. Abraham Maslow’s Motivation and Personality	83
6.4. NAV’s view on the issue	85
6.5. Summary of the discussion.....	88
Conclusion.....	91
References	92
Appendix A: Interview Guide	98

1. Introduction

Norway is a popular destination for asylum seekers and immigrants. Approximately 16 percent of the Norwegian population are immigrants and 4 percent of the population has a refugee background (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). As one of the richest countries in the world, Norway's welfare model is significantly dependent on a high residents' participation in labor and high tax revenue (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). In the Meld. St. 30 "From the reception center to labor market", the Ministry of Justice and Public Security states:

It is essential for the Norwegian society that newly arrived immigrants with refugee backgrounds are enabled to enter the labor market as soon as possible. It is essential that immigrants do not remain outside the labor market, and become dependent on cash benefits (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015–2016, p.5.).

In the report "Integration and Trust" NOU 2017:2, the Ministry highlights that it is not only economic concerns that raise the subject of refugee participation in labor, but also a question of social inequality and poverty among unemployed (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2017). To maintain a strong society, where each member enjoys financial independence and social justices, most residents should participate in the labor. Hence, individuals with a refugee background who stay outside the labor market are not only at risk of weakening the Norwegian economy, but also may feel excluded from the Norwegian society (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). "When individuals or groups do not participate, or experience feeling of not belonging, a parallel society can arise, where people develop their own rules and codes and in the worst case may be in violation of Norwegian law" (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015–2016, p.9, para.3).

Therefore, a goal of the Norwegian government is to increase the number of employed residents with a refugee background and decrease the number of people dependent on state support. To meet the goal, the government initiated the Introduction Act in March 2005. The Introduction Act is an act on the Introduction Program that is performed by the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) since January 2006. The goal of the program is to prepare newly arrived refugees for a life and work in Norway by providing the Norwegian language and social science classes

over a duration of 2 years. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2015-2016) considers the program as highly successful, and states that nearly 70 percent of interviewees end up working or enrolling in higher education after the program.

However, even with the success of the Introduction Program, Statistics Norway (SSB) states that the employment rate among refugees is significantly lower than among other residents of Norway. Only 45 percent of residents with a refugee background are employed (SSB, 2016). At the same time, neither the Ministry (2015-2016) nor SSB (2016) specifies the type of employment and whether the jobs require higher education. According to SSB (2017), 20 percent of the overall population with a refugee background in Norway has higher education. Many of the 20 percent are individuals with a refugee background who came to Norway during childhood and received education in Norway. Others are individuals who came to Norway as an adult and have higher education from a country other than Norway.

SSB (2017) highlights that there is a significant lack of data for the levels of educations among newly resettled refugees in Norway as often foreign education is not recognized in Norway, or an individual is unable to provide educational documents. Hence, difficulties with the recognition of foreign education may make it difficult to find a job within a professional field in Norway for the newly arrived refugees. Along with that, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2015-2016) names knowledge of the Norwegian language to be ultimately important for employment in Norway.

However, while these reasons may be explaining unemployment among newly arrived refugees with a degree from a foreign country, the reasons for unemployment among highly educated adults who have lived in Norway for a long time and received an education here are unclear. Therefore, the reasons for unemployment among highly educated adults with a refugee background are an important subject to discuss. Another dimension of the subject of unemployment is a role a meaningful job and career in life. While current research is not a psychological research, the theory of Identity and the Life Cycles by Erik H. Erikson (1950) and the Theory of Motivations by Abraham Maslow (1954) have a high relevance to the topic.

1.1. Problem Statement

The employment rate among refugees in Norway is rather low in comparison to the labor immigrants and residents with non-refugee background, with only 45 percent of individuals with a refugee background working (SSB, 2016). While 20 percent of adults with a refugee background have higher education, Norwegian Statistics (2017) does not specify the type of employment among these 45 percent, and whether it requires higher education.

The goal of the research is, therefore, to examine the reasons for unemployment among highly educated adults with a refugee background in Norway and the importance of profession and a career to them. The thesis first presents detailed research questions and objectives; then presents the background with a focus on Norwegian legislation about refugees in the Chapter 2. The third part presents conceptual and theoretical framework with a focus on works of Erik H. Erikson and Abraham Maslow and a brief literature review of researches by other authors. The fourth part presents detailed methodology. The fifth part presents findings, following with a discussion of findings in the part six and the conclusion.

1.2. Research questions and objectives

The objectives of the current research are to examine the importance of work and career to highly educated refugees in Norway. Using the theories of Erik Erikson and Abraham Maslow the research asks if individuals with a refugee background can find employment in line with their training and education? In addition I explore how important are professions to them and how inability to work within their professions affects their lives.

The research questions of the study are:

RQ1: Do highly educated individuals with a refugee background find jobs relevant to education?

- What are the main challenges to their finding employment consistent with their education?

RQ2: Do highly educated individuals with a refugee background feel that their refugee background affects employers' willingness to hire them?

- Have highly educated adults with a refugee background ever felt discriminated, or that their dignity as a person was not respected, while applying for jobs in Norway?

- Do they feel that they have equal opportunities for career success with non-refugees?

RQ3: How important is a profession is to educated adults with a refugee background?

- Does the inability to find a job relevant to their education affects their identity, self-esteem and lives?

2. Background

The history of migration to Norway starts in 1946, when the Norwegian Refugee Council was established as a support for the refugees of the Second World War (Cooper, 2015). However, it was not until 1970's when due to the increasing flow of migrants to Norway, the Norwegian government restricted the immigration (Cooper, 2015). In 2008, the Norwegian government issued the Immigration Act as a main legislation regarding the immigration to Norway (Thorud et al., 2015-2016). The 2015-2016 report "Immigrants and Immigration" states, "The Immigration Act of 15 May 2008 regulates the entry of foreigners into Norway and their right to residence and work. The Immigration Act and the corresponding Immigration Regulation entered into force on 1 January 2010" (Thorud et al., 2015-2016, p.13).

As one of the richest countries in the world and a human rights supporter, Norway is a popular destination for asylum seekers and labor immigrants (Cooper, 2015). SSB (2017) states that while labor immigration is in decline, approximately 16 percent of the Norwegian population are immigrants. In the beginning of 2016 nearly 700 000 immigrants from more than 200 countries were registered in Norway; 20 percent of the overall immigrant population are refugees. 150 000 children were born to the immigrants in Norway by the beginning of 2016 (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016, p.1, para.3).

Norway recognizes all human rights including the 1951 Convention on Status of Refugees. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) defines a refugee as "a person who meets the requirements for being granted with a protection/asylum in Norway" (UDI, 2017, n.a., para.1). The Norwegian Statistics, SSB, states that roughly 3.6 percent (188 000) of the population in Norway have a refugee background, 35 000 (25 percent) arrived to Norway through the family reunion. The SSB states "at the start of 2015, 188 000 persons with a refugee background were living legally in Norway. The 188 000 refugees come from a total of 169 different countries, mostly from Somalia, Iraq, and Iran" (Østby, SSB, 2016, para.12). Somalians are the largest group of refugees in Norway (Østby, SSB, 2016).

2.1. Asylum Seekers and migration in Norway

A person is considered eligible for asylum/protection is a person "who has a well-founded fear" of persecution, or is under a real risk of being subjected to death penalty, torment or other humiliating treatment in the home country (UDI, 2017, n/a). Each individual case regarding the

asylum is resolved in accordance with the United Nations Refugee Convention. In accordance with the rules and regulations of the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI), a person granted with protection receives temporary residence permit for three years. After three years, a person may apply for permanent residence (UDI, 2017).

According to UDI, 2,009 people sought asylum in Norway by the end of May, 2017 and 10 288 people currently live in the asylum centers in Norway (UDI, 2017). In comparison, 31 145 people sought after asylum in 2015; hence there is a significant drop in number of applications (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). SSB (Østby, 2016) notes that 20-25 percent of asylum application are rejected annually. Every decision is based on individual case, however, in 2016, most applicants from Eritrea had been granted with asylum, while most applications from Afghanistan were denied. Due to the change of the situation in Afghanistan, from January 2016, people from safe areas of the country are no longer entitled to seek asylum in Norway. The ministry reports that by the November 2016, 850 Afghani citizens were deported from Norway (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2017).

The UDI's practice for granting asylum applications in 2015 and in 2016 (UDI 2016) suggests that there are rather few applications from Syrians and Eritreans that will be rejected, but there have been far more rejections of applications from Iraqis and Afghans. The UDI's overview of applications that were settled in 2015 (UDI 2016) shows that half were granted protection, while 30 per cent of the cases were withdrawn or referred to other countries, either under the Dublin Convention (see box) or because they had stayed in a safe third country. We do not know how many of the asylum seekers' applications will be successful, but calculations based on past practice, and where the impact of any restrictive measures has not been factored in, give an estimate of 15 500 (Østby, SSB, 2017, para 20-21).

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security expects 5 000 to 15 000 people to apply for asylum in Norway in the nearest future (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). In 2005, the Norwegian government issued the Immigration Act to maintain a better control over the immigrant flow. According to the Act, an individual from a country outside the European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EEA) or Nordic countries must apply for a specific visa to be

entitled to live and work in Norway. If a person does not meet the requirements, a visa may be denied (UDI, 2017). Hence, it is rather difficult to receive a residence in Norway, and a refugee status in particular (Østby, SSB, 2016). However, even with an Immigration Act and existing asylum policies, the current government seeks to restrict the immigration rules for refugees and families. There are several reasons upon which the government suggests “tighter immigration rules”. First, the economic reasons, where the government highlights dependency of the Norwegian welfare model on a tax revenue, hence high labor participation. Second, the safety of the citizens of Norway, where the government argues for importance of a more thorough personality check and control of family migration among refugees. The third, false asylum applications. Often, those ineligible to reside in Norway attempt to find a “loophole” in the migration system and apply for the asylum without an actual need in refuge. The situation when increasing amount of people falsehoods in the asylum applications to receive a residence permit, negatively affects those who is truly in need of asylum, as it leads for a state to restrict the migration policies (Ogata, 1992). It is highly difficult for a migration service to determine whether an applicant provides truthful information, hence, the state faces the risk of rejecting an asylum application of a person in danger and opposite (Ogata, 1992).

Therefore, the government restricted asylum-seeking rules to have a better control over asylum seekers flow (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). In the press release, “Necessary tightening of Norway’s asylum rules” (April 8, 2016) the government announces, “18 points aimed at tightening Norway’s asylum rules, a broad majority in the Parliament endorsed. The Government’s proposals build on the agreement reached in the Parliament” (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016, para.3).

The main points are the restriction on ‘family reunion’ rules; improvement of the identity check and storage of the information; changes in the deadlines for the appeals against the application decision (from 3 weeks to 1); increasing the age limit for family migration for spouses and cohabitants (not younger than 24); restricting the rules for a permanent residence. To obtain a permanent residence a person shall live in Norway for at least five years, and work for at least 12 months. Along with that, a person shall prove financial independence for his/hers family to be eligible to apply for a family migration (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016). Hence, the main goal of the government to assure that majority of the migrants and refugees in Norway are working and pay taxes. Along with that, the Norwegian government has strict integration

policies, to assure that all members of Norwegian society follow the law, culture and participate in the society (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016).

The Introduction Act and IMDi

When a person is granted with asylum and receives a residence permit, UDI forwards the case to the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). IMDi is responsible for the performance of the Introduction Program described in the Introduction Act. The Norwegian government accepted the Introduction Act in 2005. The prior goal of the act is “to increase the possibility of newly arrived immigrants participating in working and social life and to increase their financial independence” (The Introduction Act, 2005, n/a). The right and obligation to participate in the program applies to the newly arrived refugees and their families of the ages 18 – 55. The program provides basic training in social and natural sciences, Norwegian language and culture. One of the main agendas of IMDi is to provide resettlement for new refugees and to maintain relationship between municipal government and the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration, NAV. A person who received a protection is entitled to move to an assigned municipality in Norway in order to participate in the Introduction Program (The Introduction Act, 2005).

The Department of Integration and Diversity was established in 2006. While UDI is responsible for immigration, IMDi is responsible for the resettlement of refugees and the performance of the Introduction Program. IMDi cooperates with the municipalities to resettle the refugees. However, a person is not eligible of choosing a place of residence, unless a person received a job offer (IMDi, 2017). An individual who refuses to move to assigned municipality risk to lose a right to participate in the program (IMDi, 2017). The second step of the introduction program are language and basic educational courses. During three first months after the resettlement refugees are obligated to start classes. To receive a certificate upon finishing the program a person must take at least 600 hours of the Norwegian language and social studies courses (IMDi, 2017). At average, the duration of the program is two years. After finishing program, an individual is granted with a certificate (IMDi, 2017.).

In cooperation with the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Organization (NAV), IMDi assists refugees with finding permanent and temporary jobs (IMDi, 2017.). The main goal of IMDi and NAV is to employ as many refugees as soon as possible. The role of NAV in the Introduction

Program varies from municipality to municipality. Generally, NAV helps refugees to find a job based on individual's education, skills and experience. Refugees are eligible to work full time (IMDi, 2017).

NOKUT and the Recognition of Higher Education

Education is essential to find a job in Norway. Generally, there is a limited data about the education levels among asylum seekers and newly arrived refugees. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, NOKUT (2015) explains the lack of data by the fact that very few asylum seekers and refugees have educational documents. However, NOKUT (2015) states that roughly 20 percent out of 100.000 refugees in Norway “have some form of higher education”; or 2 in 10 refugees according to SSB (2016).

General recognition of foreign education by NOKUT is based on comparison of foreign degree against the Norwegian degree structure (NOKUT, 2017). A person who wishes to apply for the recognition of higher education must provide apostilled copies and translation of required documents. Document requirement differs from country to country. Generally, an individual shall provide personal identification documents, certificates and diplomas from the educational establishment, translated and apostilled (NOKUT, 2017). Refugees, who have the original of the documents that confirm the educational degree should follow the standard application for verification of the foreign degree. However, for those unable to provide the documents, NOKUT offers a qualification assessment for refugees (NOKUT, 2016).

Qualifications assessment for refugees is designed help refugees who for various reasons cannot apply for the recognition of education through the general procedure. The assessment may apply to people whose education was disrupted and for people who do not speak Norwegian or English, states NOKUT (2016) with a reference to the Director General Terje Mørland. The qualification assessment consists of verification and background check of the available documents, handwritten letter with an explanation of the obtained degree, and personal interview with one of the officers (NOKUT, 2016). After the assessment, an applicant may receive “NOKUT’s Qualification Passport”. The passport is valid for three years and gives a holder eligibility to apply for work or continue an education. However, a person should meet the Norwegian language proficiency requirements to be eligible to receive or continue a higher education in Norway (NOKUT, 2016).

2.2. Refugees and the Labor Market

The government believes that strict control of the number of residence permits granted in Norway is important. The integration field depends on immigration to Norway being handled in such a way that those who are granted residence permits are received in a good way and can enter the labor market and community life immediately (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016, para.10).

SSB (2015) states that employment rate among non-Norwegian citizens is generally lower than among the citizens. However, the employment rate among labor immigrants is significantly higher than among refugees. SSB (2015) notes that employment rate is directly proportional to the length of residency in Norway; the lowest employment rate is among newly resettled refugees (SSB, 2015). The approximate employment rate among refugees was 45% in 2014. The government states “71 percent of males and 66 percent of females (17 to 74) were enrolled into the labor market in 2014. Among immigrants, these rates are 68 and 58 percent. Refugee employment is 20 percent lower than the average in Norway” (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016-2016, p.4, para 3).

In the article for SSB, Lars Østby (SSB, 2016) notes that refugees have the lowest employment rate in comparison with other immigrants in Norway. The author argues that normally, employment rate among new refugees increases with a length of residence. However, in the case of Somalian refugees the employment rate is very low even among those, who has lived in Norway for more than ten year (SSB, 2016). Low employment rates among refugees, and particularly newly arrived refugees, is the main apprehension of the Norwegian government. In the report for SSB (2016), Østby argues that main concern of the government are financial expenses; for instance, resettlement Syrian refugees is expected to cost approximately 430 billion NOK (SSB, 2016).

In the white paper issued in 2016 “Meld.St.30 2015-2016” the Ministry of Justice and Public Security highlights the main agenda of the migration policies: *to increase refugee participation in labor and to improve the integration policies*. The ministry stresses that while many immigrants work, a high number of refugees stays outside the labor market (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). In the report, the ministry argues, “The Norwegian

welfare model is dependent on high participation in the workforce. It is essential for society that newly-arrived immigrants with refugee background to enter the labor market as soon as possible” (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016, p.1, para 2).

According to the government (2015-2016), it is highly undesirable for a state to have an increasing number of unemployed refugees who is dependent on social benefits and not paying taxes. As SSB (2015), the ministry states that employment rate is highly dependent on the length of residence in Norway (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016). Unemployment negatively affects individuals, families and the society. Dependency of big number of people on social payments leads to lower tax returns and pressures the welfare system (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016).

However, not only financial side of the migration concerns the government. With expected 15, 000 asylum seekers in the future and the fact that 16 percent of the Norwegian population are immigrants, the government stresses (2015-2016) the necessity of stricter migration rules. With immigrants from nearly 200 different countries and backgrounds, families where adult members remain outside the labor market are at risk of difficult financial and social situation (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016). The ministry argues:

Remaining outside the labor market puts many families in a difficult financial situation. The upshot of this is that today children with an immigrant background make up more than half of all children in financially challenged families. A greater proportion of the population being dependent on government handouts raises concerns, especially when the differences follow ethnic lines. This is financially and socially negative for both the individual and their family, and at the same time results in lower tax revenues and increased pressure on the welfare system (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016, para.12).

The report refers to the “vulnerable areas” in some European countries, where large groups of refugees are unemployed and are completely excluded from the social life. Hence, the Norwegian government wishes to avoid the same situation in Norway, where high unemployment rates among large groups of immigrants and refugees, may lead to creation of “ghettos”, or a “parallel society with their own rules and codes and at worst with the violation of the Norwegian law” (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2015-2016, para.13). It is due to that reason the

IMDi does not permit refugees to choose their place of residence (from the interview with the head of the local NAV office).

To make the integration process more efficient the government suggests making integration programs more “work-oriented”, by implementing a more efficient training for the newly arrived immigrants. For the asylum seekers who waits for the decision of UDI , the government suggests to implement the Norwegian language and social studies courses, to “learn about the fundamental values upon which Norwegian society is founded” (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016, p.6, para. 4). Hence, the main goals of the government are to reduce the number of people dependent on “cash” benefits, and increase participation in labor and tax revenue (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, 2016). To provide better integration and assure that every resident in Norway learns Norwegian, understand and respects the Norwegian culture, laws and social structure. Current agenda of Norwegian government to be sure that all residence in Norway and especially those with a refugee background to participate in welfare market.

To conclude, the Norwegian government intends to continue stricter migration policies in order to assure that the majority of immigrants (and refugees) are at work. While the government and SSB present a variety of reports and debates regarding the issue, there is a lack of concrete data on the employment rates among refugees. In the updated report for SSB (2017), Helge Næsheim argues that if to exclude refugees with the shortest length of residence from the picture, the difference in employment among refugees and the population is not very high. However, the author notices that while data for employment is reliable, the data for unemployment is somewhat inaccurate. It is due to the fact, that unemployment rates only presents people registered in the NAV (Næsheim, SSB, 2017).

The SSB report (2017) concludes that there is connection between the employment and length of residence; hence, new refugees are likely to find a job with a time. While Somalian refugees have the lowest employment rate, the author argues that it may be due to the fact that many refugees are receiving an education, which is “rather advantage, than disadvantage” (Næsheim, SSB, 2017). Refugees from Iran have longest working hours per week, with average of 70 percent. The author highlights that men tend to find work faster, than women. Overall, the report concludes, “Participation in education should be considered a natural path to employment for refugees in the same way as for the general population, particularly for those with little schooling from their homeland” (Næsheim, SSB, 2017, para. 29).

Along with the low levels of education and skills, another reason for unemployment among refugees may be prejudices towards refugees. SSB (2016) states that attitudes toward immigrants and refugees became more negative by 2016. The report “Attitudes towards immigration and immigrants” notes that amount of people who believes that “it should be more difficult for refugees and asylum seekers to get a residence permit in Norway. This is an increase of 4 percentage points since 2015” (SSB, 2016, para. 1). At the same, time, number of people who believes that immigrants and refugees should be able to work full-time dropped by 8 percent (para.4). Nearly half of respondents believe that immigrants outside the Nordic countries cause insecurity for the state, and believe immigrants should become “as similar to Norwegians as possible” (para. 7). A number of people who have a direct contact with immigrants declined by 6 percent since 2015 (SSB, 2016, para. 8).

2.3. Dignity in the context of the right to work

In the light of the increased negative attitudes towards immigrants and refugees, the question whether there are prejudices towards highly educated individuals with a refugee background among the employers arises. The constitution of Norway recognizes human rights and Article 98 of the constitution states, “All people are equal under the law” (The Norwegian Constitution, 2016, Article 98). Hence, there is no direct legal discrimination of human rights in Norway. However, prejudices may make a person to feel unworthy and not treated with dignity.

“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world....” (UN General Assembly, 1948). Dignity is not a right by itself, but is an essence of human rights. The direct meaning of the word dignity is “worthiness” or “self-respect”, though, every individual have a different understanding of it and to what extent it is (was) violated. Dignity, therefore, is subjective. Due to the subjectivity of the concept, there is a debate among philosophers and academics, what is a true role of dignity in a human rights theory (Beitz, 2013). However, dignity is an essence of every human being. It is very core of one’s identity and consciousness. Prejudices towards a certain group or a person, are therefore, contradictory to the human rights, where “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (Human Rights Declaration, Article 1, 1948).

When a person feels that he or she cannot find work due to his background, it may lead to a feeling that his potential is not recognized. In that matter, work and human rights have a strong link. “Work is about income, about the constitution of one’s identity, about social inclusion” (Mundlak, 2007, p.190, para.1). Guy Mundlak (2007) argued that the right to work is indeed a right to dignified work; work in accordance with one’s personal choice and experiences, work that recognizes person’s potential. The author wrote, “The right to work is inseparable from right to equality and the right to free artistic expression and creation” (Mundlak, 2007, p.194, para.1).

Hence, work is a big part of one’s life. It gives income that provides stability. It gives social status that affects self-esteem. Work is essential part of identity of adult, his self-esteem and mental health. While financial independence is highly important in adult life, it may not be enough. Role of work and profession in life is more complex. Especially in the case of refugees, to whom employment is an essential part of integration and coping.

3. Conceptual and theoretical framework

Erik H. Erikson and Abraham Maslow published their major works in 1950's. Both authors, in their own way, revolutionized the field of psychoanalysis and changed the way the psychology views personality and identity development. Erik Erikson changed the view on identity crisis and identity development, while Abraham Maslow known as a “father” of humanistic approach in psychology, the approach that concentrates on the positive sides of human personalities, rather than negative. Both Erikson and Maslow concentrate on mental health, and not illness, in contrast to the assumptions of Freud.

Erik H. Erikson introduced the theory of the Life Cycles in 1950. During the observation of refugees in United States during the Second World War, the author noticed common tendencies in the ways adult refugees cope with resettlement and concluded that identities of the adults were strongly influenced by the traumatic experience of resettlement. Therefore, the author (1950) determined that one's identity develops throughout the life span, and not in childhood as was believed in psychological sciences before and, later introduced the theory of the Life Cycles. Erikson argued that adult refugees develop the sense of uprootedness that leads to the difficulties with adjusting to a new life. At the same time, uprootedness is an outcome of the loss of sense of stability in life, where stability is an important factor of adult life. Job and financial independence are important components of a stable life (Elkind, 1970).

In the Theory of Motivations (1954) by Abraham Maslow, the author argued that need in self-actualization is the highest human need and the top of the pyramid of needs (1954). The author defined the need to actualize as a main motivation for professional aspiration. As the average adult spends a significantly large part of their life at work, Maslow argued, an individual who is unable to do what he is best at, and actualize the potential, risks being unsatisfied with the other spheres of life as well. At the same time, the author argued that in a society where social status is defined by the professional and financial success, there is a dependency between one's self-esteem and his occupation. Where, a lower job satisfaction lowers self-esteem, and, self-esteem is an important part of mental health. Therefore, it is important for an individual to be satisfied with his occupation (Maslow, 1954).

The purpose of the chapter is to discuss theories of Erikson (1950) and Maslow (1954) and additional literature in relation to the research questions. The chapter first discusses work of Erik Erikson, then Abraham Maslow. Subchapter 3.1. presents concept of identity and the theory of

“Life Cycles” by Erik H. Erikson. Subchapters 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 present the discussion of Erikson’s Life Cycles in the context of career and the concepts of Identity and Uprootedness in the context of refugees, along with the review of the literature. Subchapter 3.2. presents the theory of “Motivation and Personality” following with the Hierarchy of Human Needs by Abraham Maslow in the subchapter 3.2.1. The last part of a chapter 3, subchapter 3.2.2 discusses concepts of career and self-esteem in the context of refugees along with the review of relevant researches.¹

3.1. Erik Erikson’s Stages of Life

What is identity? The word “Identity” means same or similar from the Latin “idem” and is defined in the Oxford Dictionary (2017, n/a.) as “the fact of who or what a person is”. “Identity is related to what or who we want to become, for instance, a musician, a tennis player a firefighter or a politician” (Tønnesvang, 2013 p.229, para.5). Identity is the past, the present and projections of the possible future (Tønnesvang, 2013). Every individual, assuming a complete life span, is born an infant, becomes adolescent, then adult. Transformation of the identity through a life course is identity development, the process when an individual becomes himself, who he is, or who he wishes to be. However, identity development does not mean getting a new personality. On the contrary, Identity, within Erik Erikson’s work, is a sameness of self through a life course (Tønnesvang, 2013). Jan Tønnesvang (2013, p.229, para.1) argues that it is a human nature and to perform as “the same organism throughout the time”.

Identity is biological, social, cultural or philosophical phenomena, depending on the context (Tønnesvang, 2013). In psychological sciences, identity is the subjective perception of self through objectivity of the social surrounding (Model, 1993). Erikson’s definition of identity is both social and psychological. Model (1993) debates that identity within Erikson’s theory is something both self-created and given to the individual by the cultural surrounding “it arises from combination of childhood identifications, absorption in a new configuration and dependent on the process by which society identifies a young individual” (Model, 1993, p. 13, para. 2). Erikson

¹ Throughout my description of this theory, I have decided to use *he/him* as a personal pronoun rather than *she*, as this is used consistently in the theory developed by both Erikson and Maslow.

himself (1959) defines two types of identity *personal* and *ego*. Personal identity of an individual is awareness of his existence; ego identity is a “quality of existence” (p.23, para. 3).

Ego identity, then, in its subjective aspect, is the awareness of the fact that there are a selfsameness and continuity to the ego’s synthesizing methods and that these methods are effective in safe-guarding the sameness and continuity of ones meaning for others (Erikson, 1959, p.23).

For Erikson, a person develops ego identity when becoming independent from the childhood identifications, becomes fully aware of his personal interests, tastes, preferences, and is no longer dependent on parents. Within the theory of life cycles, it happens during the Adolescence (V). Often known as rebellious stage, it is a period of life when an individual fully realizes his personality, or character. Identity development from adolescence to late adulthood is different from childhood development. It is a development when adult learns new roles and adds new dimensions of identity: a student, a lover, a parent, a coworker. Healthy identity then is ability to keep the sameness regardless of external influence and change; while performing different social roles a person remains self (Ertorer, 2014). For refugees ability to keep sameness of identity becomes challenging, as forced resettlement by its nature is opposite from regularity.

Theory of the Life cycles

Before discussing uprootedness as a common syndrome among refugees, it is important to introduce the Theory of Life Cycles (1950) by Erik H. Erikson. The theory describes eight stages of life. However, as the research group of the thesis are adults with a refugee background, this chapter only presents stages V to VIII.

The theory of *Life Cycles*, or stages, gradually describes development of identity from infancy to an old age. Erikson (1982) developed his theory based on three vital stages of life: hope, fidelity, and care. Hope as a *basic trust vs. basic mistrust* in childhood, fidelity as *identity vs. identity confusion* during adolescence and care as *generativity vs. self-absorption* in adulthood, “these terms represent basic qualities that, in fact, “qualify” a young person to enter the generation cycle – and an adult to conclude it” (Erikson, 1982, p. 55, para. 1).

Later the author developed each of the three basic stages to (I) *trust vs. mistrust*, (II) *autonomy vs. shame and doubt*, (III) *initiative vs. guilt*, (IV) *industry vs. inferiority*, (V) *identity vs. identity confusion*, (VI) *intimacy vs. isolation*, (VII) *generosity vs. stagnation* and (VIII) *integrity vs. despair, disgust* (Erikson, 1982, p. 56-57, para. n/a).

The first stage, infancy, (basic trust vs mistrust) is HOPE; the second, early childhood, (autonomy vs. shame and doubt) is WILL; the third, play age, (initiative vs. guilt) is PURPOSE; the fourth, school age, (industry vs. inferiority) is COMPETENCE; the fifth, adolescence, (identity vs. identity confusion) is FIDELITY; the six, young adulthood, (intimacy vs. isolation) is LOVE; the seventh, adulthood, (generosity vs. stagnation) is CARE; and the eights, old age, (integrity vs. despair, disgust) is WISDOM (Erikson, 1982).

The basis of the theory is the struggle between two opposing tendencies, where the outcome of a struggle is a new stage of identity (Riley, 1979). Erikson views a mental crisis as a positive influence on identity; one cannot mature (evolve to a next stage) without overcoming a crisis. The struggle between two opposing tendencies makes another stage possible (Riley, 1979).

V. Identity vs Role confusion

The fifth stage, adolescence, is a transition stage between childhood and adulthood. It is a middle stage of life, when childhood comes to the end and youth begins (Erikson, 1950, p.266, para. 4). It is a stage where Erikson uses the term “identity” for the first time. A young individual begins to go through the physical change, discovering new feelings, while performing vary social roles, such as son, classmate, grandson, football player etc. The ability to emerge this multiple roles into one is what Erikson (1950) sees as identity. It is an awareness of who he truly is and which direction the life may go and ability to keep sameness and continuity of identifications. A child, who has failed to develop the sense of sameness of his identifications may face the identity diffusion: not understanding who he is or where he belongs to.

VI. Intimacy vs isolation

The six stage is the first stage of adulthood. It is a period of life when an individual chooses a future path. Entering certain studies or trainings, going to the army, looking for a significant other. Preparing the basis for the adult life. A person is no longer a teenager, and not fully adult. By intimacy, Erikson (1950) does not simply understand romantic relationships, it is the sense a young adult develops by being able to commit, share feelings with others without losing his identity. Intimacy develops through friendship, between relatives, colleges, classmates (Elkind,

1970). Contrary, a person who failed to develop the sense of intimacy develops a sense of isolation. Isolation is loneliness, inability to trust, share the feelings even with the closest social circle, such as spouses, siblings or parents “no one to share with or care for” (Elkind, 1970, p.16, para.2).

VII. Generativity vs stagnation

The seventh stage and the second stage of adulthood is a stage of generosity vs stagnation. An adult knows who he is. He has a career, family, hobbies. He knows the direction of life, and imagines likely future (Erikson, 1950). The two conflicting senses fighting during this life period are generativity and stagnation. A person with a dominant sense of generativity cares about the family and people around him. Generativity is care for younger generation: family, younger colleges, students, etc. Generosity is a will to be meaningful, to have a useful role in the society (Elkind, 1970). An individual who for various reasons lacks the sense of generativity develops dominating sense of stagnation. Stagnation is a lack of care for others. It is a rather cynical view of the world, where the strive for doing something meaningful in life is overshadowed by the self-interests, for instance interest in a higher profit and not the quality of the performance as a teacher, doctor or artist (Elkind, 1970).

VIII. Integrity vs despair.

The third stage of adulthood is integrity vs despair. It is a time of reflection and evaluation of life. A person who is satisfied with life develops a sense of integrity. An individual who is generally unsatisfied with life develops dominating sense of despair (Elkind, 1970). Erikson (1959) describes integrity as peace; acceptance of life the way it is. It is a time of retirement and relaxation. Erikson argues that only by the eighth stage of life an individual learns his true self. Despair, on the other hand, is a displeasure with life. It is a result of realization that the life is too short “to start another life and to try out alternative roads” (Erikson, 1959, p.104, para. 3).

Three stages of adulthood in the context of a career

Erikson (1950, 1964) considers adulthood as the beginning of life; “life, so saying goes, begins: by which we mean work or study for a specified career, sociability with the other sex, and in time, marriage and a family of one’s own” (Erikson, 1959, p. 100, para. 3). Throughout adulthood, average individual gets an education or training in a field of interest, seeks employment and builds a career, gets married, becomes a parent, or in other words settles down (Levinson,

1980). An individual pursues socially accepted and stable life “*senior position in the adult world*” (Levinson, 1986, p. 5, para. 9).

Education, job search, marriage, children and financial burden make adulthood the most challenging period of life “*adulthood is the era in which we are most buffeted by our own passions and ambitions from within and by the demands of family, community from without*” (Levinson, 1986, p. 5, para 10). Seventh stage of adulthood Generosity vs. Stagnation is a central stage of adulthood. Erikson describes the stage as “*Generativity is a primarily concern in establishing and guiding the next generation, the concept is meant to include productivity and creativity*” (Erikson, 1950, p. 267). While Erikson considers parenthood as a main trigger of generosity, and thus central element of adulthood, other psychologist, who elaborated theory of Life Cycles understand generosity beyond the reproduction need.

For instance, Charles Slater (2003) who discussed Erikson’s adulthood stages, argued that as every individual is unique, an expression of generosity differs from person to person. One expresses generosity through being a parent, another through being a doctor or teacher, the third through being a politician. Generosity is not only strictly parent-child relationships; it is a complex of family, work, and society relationships. A person with a high sense of generosity has a strong will to be helpful, not only in the family, but in the society (Slater, 2003).

When a person develops sense of generosity and not stagnation, transition to the next stage of identity development happens. However, Erikson (1950) himself noted that every individual faces multiple crises throughout a life span. Generally, identity crisis in Erikson’s theory is an inability to complete a life cycle. However, a crisis is not always bad; without overcoming an identity crisis one cannot truly mature. If a sense of stagnation wins over the sense of generosity – it is a crisis. Though, not all individuals in crises have a mental illness.

A reason for the dominating sense of stagnation maybe temporary and circumstantial (Slater, 2003). One of them is a crisis of parenthood, when one wishes to have a child, but is unable to have one, or oppositely, one becomes a parent too early (Slater, 2003). Another, a crisis related to work, when a person unemployed, dismissed, retired or unsatisfied with the type of employment. “*Work can also provoke a crisis of generativity*” Slater (2003, p. 57, para.7). Many societies in the world view work as the essential part of adult life. Work provides financial and social stability. Difficulties with employment can trigger identity crisis, as stability in life is highly

dependent on salary, working hours and pension. A person who experiences a crisis due to work difficulties may become unsatisfied with other spheres of life.

Along with Charles Slater, other psychologists elaborated the Theory of Life Cycles. Slater (2003) describes work of Valliant and Milofsky (1980). Authors suggested the stage *Career vs Self-absorption*, that in their opinion shall come before the generosity. Authors argue that average individual “climbs the ladder” of other social institutes, before becoming a parent and facing confrontation of generosity vs stagnation. A man first pursues the career and only after establishing professional stability, he is ready for generosity (Slater, 2003). Another psychologist that elaborated on Erikson’s stages is David Levinson (1986). Levinson’s main argument is that life is complex. The author suggested the theory of life structure as an addition to Erikson’s Cycles. The idea behind the theory is that simple questions as “who am I”, “where am I”, “what do I do right now”, “what bring me pleasure in life”, “what is most important to me in life,” help to structure components of identity (Levinson, 1986).

Levinson (1986) argued that social relationships, such as family, co-workers, children, parents, neighbors, football team etc., are main elements of a life structure. Each social connection has its own meaning and value in one’s life; Connections may change and evolve with time, gain or lose its significance. When connections change so does the life structure. However, every person has fundamental relationships that form his identity; define who he is. Levinson (1986) writes that commonly the key aspects of life are career and family. The key relationships stay central throughout the life cycle and receive the greatest attention and time in one’s life (Levinson, 1986).

Work as the key component of life receives a lot of attention and time from an individual. The contemporary society suggests the structure where every individual should go to a kindergarten, preschool, school, high school and college. After obtaining a degree or training in the specific field of interests, then starts to look for a job. Levinson (1986) refers to it as “climbing the ladder”. Average individual chooses a career in early adulthood. Slater (2003) argues that because of such social structure one often identifies himself by his occupation, “I am what I do” as people spend majority of life learning the profession and working (p.62, para 5). A person, who fails to achieve socially accepted standards, for instance, does not receive higher education, is unemployed, not married and childless, etc., risks facing identity problems (Levinson, 1986).

Career achievements in the society often determine social status and the quality of life. In the society one is often dependent on his social status “*and social status and recognition, and their*

salaries determine the lifestyle, that they will lead and the people they will know” (Slater, 2003, p.62, para.5). For adults during the second and the third stages of adulthood employment equals stability and confidence in tomorrow. Unstable life, inability to provide for the family may lead to identity crisis and depression. A person who is unable to find a job relevant to professional degree or working experience may feel unfulfilled and worthless. Unemployment, along with job loss, retirement or sudden resettlement in case of refugees, may lead an individual to not know “who he is” or how to define oneself.

Weber and Ladkin (2011) elaborate on Levinson’s (1984) addition to Erikson’s (1950) theory, and argue that career is a key factor of social identity throughout adulthood stages of life. Social identity, according to the authors, is a categorization of oneself by social categories (student, teacher, doctor), while personal identity is more of a categorization by specific qualities and characteristics (caring, generous etc.) Social identity is a part of personal identity. Social identity, like ethnic identity is a self-categorization in relation to the group (co-workers, students in one class and so on).

Identity crisis due to work problems may occur and to young adults. Levinson (1986) describes crises among college graduates who cannot find a job in the field of study. Such young adults are in unable to make the psychological transition to the middle adulthood; trapped between adolescence and young adulthood, without a full-time employment. Another author, Alcinda Honwana (2014) refers to this social paradox as *waithood*, which literally means “waiting” for “adulthood”. The author uses this term to describe college graduates in Africa, where the employment rate within the group is critically low. Waithood is a stage when a young adult is no longer an adolescent but is not considered as adult by the society, where a job is a key factor of adult life. Honwana (2014) sees waithood as an unavoidable outcome of modernity, when social structure suggests that higher education will lead to a successful employment. Inability to find a job after the graduation leads to a crisis when expectations are higher than career opportunities in the reality. *“In the majority of cultures the ability to work and provide defines a person’s self-worth and position in the family”* (Honwana, 2014, p.32, para 4).

The synonyms for waithood are *kidults* and *adultescents* that describe university graduates unable to find a job relevant to the degree, have to settle for minor position or to move in back in with parents. Inability to find a job, and hence, grow up, makes one feeling trapped, or as ‘living in a limbo’ (Howana, 2014). Waithood as inability to mature from one life stage to another is an

identity crisis per Erikson definition. The difficulty of the situation is that social structure suggests definitions of a successful adult. A young adult who is unable to find a “successful” job soon after graduation risks to feel unfulfilled, depressed or face an identity crisis.

Erikson’s theory in the context of refugees

Migration includes both psychological and social aspects. Often the terms “uprootedness” and “identity crisis” are used in the literature that discusses resettlement and asylum. However, the author of the terms, Erik Homburger Erikson, often remains unknown outside the psychological literature (Elkind, 1970). Erik H. Erikson, American psychologist and immigrant himself, revolutionized field of identity development studies and introduced the term “identity crisis” in 1950s. Erikson’s view on psychological development in relation to the cultural, historical and political events suggested a new dimension of psychological theory and made a stronger connection between psychology and social sciences (Elkind, 1970).

In the beginning of the career, Erikson did fieldwork on several Indian Reservations in the United States. Erikson observed a certain degree depression among the majority of adult Indians, the reasons of which he was unable to explain with the traditional psychiatric theory (Elkind, 1970, p.5). The author’s main notion was inability of adult Indians to adjust to a new life, as if a part of an Indian’s identity was lost between past and present. Acceptance of “American identity” by adopting culture and speaking the language seemed as betrayal of their roots. Erikson described the condition as “uprootedness” and concluded that human identity is highly dependent on cultural order. The term “uprootedness” therefore describes a person forcefully removed from a homeland (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017). Indians that were forced to leave homes lost the sense of continuity of identity and experienced crisis resulting indifference and apathy to the present. David Elkind (1970) describes Erikson’s findings in the work “Erik Erikson’s Stages of Man”:

Central to many adult Indian’s emotional problems seemed to be *his sense of uprootedness* and lack of continuity between his present life-style and that portrayed in tribal history. Not only did the Indian sense a break with the past, but he could not identify with a future requiring assimilation of the white culture’s values. The problems faced by such men, Erikson recognized, had to do with the ego and with culture and only incidentally with sexual drives (Elkind, 1970, p. 5-6).

Thankfully, to this observation the author concluded that identity develops the course of a life, and not formed in the childhood, as it was common in the psychological theory at a time. Later, Erikson introduced the theory of the Life Cycle in the article “Eight Ages of Man” (1950). Later in the career, Erikson continued the observation of the sense uprootedness and noticed similar condition among Jewish refugees of the Second World War in the United States. Large groups of refugees, traumatized by the horrific experiences of Nazi rise in Europe, had a strong difficulty with adjustment to the new society and country. Many of them negated to integrate with the US society, holding back, as Erikson (1964) wrote, to the world that has failed them. The author explained the behavior to be a result of trauma of war that made it difficult to trust in peace and safety.

Erikson (1964) argued that often refugees are unable to develop a sense of safety; for instance, in the case described by the author, many of the European refugees believed that “Nazi army” had already occupied most states and that the USA government had been hiding it from the public (Erikson, 1964). Erikson (1964) wrote that the fear became so native to them that many developed dependency on it. Without the fear, the life seemed unpredictable, and inability to predict feared them more. The past governments had failed them and there was no hope left to trust in safety in the new country. Much as Indians in the first observation, Jewish refugees developed uprootedness and indifference to the present (Erikson, 1964).

Erikson (1964), a migrant himself, wrote that the decision to migrate is usually a result of desperation. For many people, migration is a stressful. Erikson explains it by the fact that our identities based on our roots, heritage, history, and traditions of the place we were born and raised. Migration by its very nature means a change of common turn of events. Migration is a creation of new life, new ways, and new traditions “it is an abandonment of the old roots and creation of the new roots in Change itself” (Erikson, 1964, p.84, para. 3). When a person or a group make a volunteer decision to migrate, this abandonment of the old roots and creation of new lifestyle and traditions happens gradually and rather easily. It is different for those who has migrated due of inability to stay in their homes. Because of the inability to influence or change the circumstances, often refugees may feel helpless and lost (Erikson, 1964). Erikson (1964) argued that Identity of a refugee is influenced by many factors; the transportation to another country, how far from the homeland is a country of exile, whether a person fled alone or with family and friends.

Asylum, or forced resettlement, challenges individuals sense of continuity and sameness (Eroter, 2014). Hence, refugees are at a risk of experiencing identity problems. Erikson's theory and findings are widely used by other authors. For instance, Eastmond (2007) argues that often refugees compensate the lack of stability in present with the memories of the past, native culture and its order. The tendency to seek comfort in the past, cultural order of the native country, leads to the apathy for a 'new home' and the present. As a result, individuals with such tendency prefer to live and communicate with the people of the same nationality and culture, often by forming cultural or ethnical communities (Eastmond, 2007). Life seems to be safer among people with the same background and cultural values and gives an illusion of the past life. Eastmond (2007) argues that such behavior helps to keeps sameness of identity (who a person was before the dramatic change). However, often it may lead to mental illnesses such as depression, anxieties and identity confusions.

Ertorer (2014) writes that adjustment to a new life starts with the acceptance of social and cultural norms of the hosting country; the roles that are designed for him by the *host society*. A newcomer shall adapt rules and morals the new society considers as norms. Refugees must follow the procedures designed by the state, settle for the jobs and courses reserved for them, hence obliged to change their social identities per norms of a new "dominant" society. As identity of adult is dependent on subjectivity of social sounding, a refugee starts to evaluate himself in accordance with the norms of a new country. Older the age, more difficult it is to adjust to a change. Often, inability to balance past identity and social roles with the new, leads to identity confusion. Identity confusion may result stagnation, apathy and aggression at worst (Eroter, 2014).

Resettlement is more challenging for the adult refugees than for those of a younger age. However, refugee adolescents are also at risk of having post-traumatic mental health problems. Ndengeyingoma, de Montigny and Miron (2013) write that refugee adolescents may also struggle with identity confusion. Along with that, often refugee adolescence struggle with post-traumatic stress due to a loss of family members and friends, or injuries. Identity of adolescents develops through understanding their cultural and ethnical identities. Adolescents who experienced stress of resettlement have difficulties with identity formation, when a person cannot fully relate to either of the cultures. Being a part of social life of a host country as a student at school and through the communications with teachers and classmates, an adolescent is also a part of the native cultural order at home. That paradox leads to identity confusion, and a feeling of loneliness, when an

adolescent does not know where he belongs to (Ndengeyingoma, de Montigny and Miron 2013, p.370).

The balance between two cultures differs from person to person. However, identity confusion may take place when an adolescence comes from a traditional family with authoritarian parents, when cultural order at home and at school are dramatically different. An adolescents, who suffer from identity diffusion, tend to surround themselves with “asocial people” and have a low level of resistance to the pressure and influence of peers (Ndengeyingoma, de Montigny, and Miron, 2013, p.370). Thus, forced migration is a difficult and traumatic experience to both adolescent and adults. The authors highlight that “in the host society, perceived discrimination can produce loneliness, anxiety, and somatization in adolescents” (Ndengeyingoma, de Montigny and Miron, 2013, p.370, para. 3).

Verkuyten and Nekuee (2001) state that identity and ethical identity is crucial for understanding of integration among minorities. The authors argue that as ethnic minorities are often a subject of prejudices and discrimination many of refugees develop depression and low self-esteem. As a result, members of ethnic minorities tend to group together in a face of discrimination, resulting their group identity to outshine personal identities; when a representative of ethnical minority define himself as a member of an ethnical group and less as an individual. Verkuyten and Nekuee (2001) explain it as a defense mechanism, when in discriminative environment people tend to lean towards familiar culture and similar people.

As an individual who is a subject of prejudices or discrimination develops low self-esteem, being a part of group helps to overcompensate it. The authors refer to it as a collective self-esteem. An individual who has a higher self-categorization (distinguishes his identity from a group identity) has a lesser dependence on a group self-esteem and vice versa. Often, individuals with lower self-categorization report discrimination towards the group, rather against an individual personally. Generally, individuals with lower self-categorization are more sensitive discrimination than those with higher self-categorization.

The authors define two ways of coping with the discrimination: emotion-focused and action-focused. The first type of coping is when individual avoids confrontation and the second, when a person deals with the source of discrimination by contacting the authorities and submitting formal complaints (Verkuyten & Nekuee, 2001, p. 1062, para. 4). The second method of coping is healthier, while emotion-focused coping may lead to depressions and neurosis. The authors

highlight that emotion-focused coping is a result of fear, as often refugees afraid that complaint may affect their legal status in the new country of residence. The research concludes that refugees are the most vulnerable group of migrants. Hence, mental health of the refugees is a big aspect of integration.

Employment, positively effects self-esteem and mental health. For highly educated refugees, career and possibility to work in the field of specialization may help to overcome trauma and help to integrate. Thus, it is important to discuss employment among refugees not only from economic point of view, but also from social.

3.2. Abraham Maslow's "Motivation and Personality"

Abram Maslow's «Motivation and Personality» was introduced in 1954. As an apologist of humanistic approach to psychology, Maslow believed that all humans are fundamentally good. Maslow, a lot like Erikson, concentrated on a mental health rather than illness and believed that fundament of human development is motivation to satisfy needs. What distinguished Maslow's theory from other psychologists is the believe that human needs are more complex than a need to eat, sleep and reproduce. As a result, Maslow introduced famous "hierarchy of needs" (1954), that is not only widely used in psychology, but also in economics.

Maslow's "Motivation and Personality" (1954) suggests chronological description of needs (hierarchy) with the physiological needs at the bottom, and the need to self-actualize at the top. The key argument of the theory is that a person is never truly satisfied; a satisfaction of one need leads to new desires. One wishes for money, because money allow to have an automobile. One wishes for an automobile, because the neighbors have one and "one do not wish to feel inferior to neighbors because he wants to retain his own self-respect, so he can be loved and respected by others (Maslow, 1954, p. 21, para 3). The interest of current thesis is Maslow's view on profession, career and self-esteem, that author proposes in the "Motivation and Personality". Maslow (1954) wrote that a desire to be respected is common for all human beings. According to the author, status and respect are desirable in all the cultures; in one culture, it is respected to be a doctor, in others to be a good hunter and warrior. In many societies, successful career defines social status and respect.

However, before discussing Maslow's theory, it is important to define the term "career". Definition of a "career" per Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2017, n/a.) is a progressive achievement

in a professional life; a profession for which one trains and, or a specific work one is doing for a long time. Unlike a job, career requires special, often long training. Career represents individual's interests, passions and personality. It is a way for an individual to show the potential.

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy needs.

Maslow (1954) ranks human needs chronologically, starting with physiological needs. Basic *physiological* drives such as eating, sexuality, sleep etc., are essential for human existence. Physiological drives are same for all humans. An urge to satisfy basic needs surpasses other needs; a starving or thirsty man wants to eat and drink. However, when basic needs are easily satisfied, the desires grow beyond simple satisfaction. When food is easily accessible, eating is no longer a way of providing body with nutrition, it becomes an act of psychological satisfaction, as sexuality lays beyond the need to reproduce, or drinking is a culture by itself (Maslow, 1954).

The second type of needs are the *safety needs*. By safety needs Maslow (1954) understands “security; stability; freedom from fear, from anxiety and chaos; need for structure, law, orders, limits; strength in the protector and so on” (Maslow, 1954, p. 39, para 1). Maslow (1954) argued that an average adult prefers organized, safe and lawful world that protects from chaos, danger and uncertainty. Uncertainty of the future is the main fear among adults, both in Erikson's (1950) and Maslow's views. As a man who has eaten does not feel hungry, a man who lives in a safety does not feel endangered (1954, p.42, para. 2). And, opposite, in a dangerous environment (war, violence, environmental instability), the need for safety overshadows “higher” needs (Maslow, 1954, p.43, para. 1). For instance, a war motivates one to seek asylum in a safer environment, regardless of the risks.

The next is *the need for belongingness and love*. The author stresses that is difficult to define and hence research senses of love and belongingness. However, Maslow (1954) highlights the importance of it. Belongingness is an urge to be surrounded by people one feels connected with. To be at home, to have roots, to have own neighborhood, territory, colleges, gang or group of friends. It is important for an individual to belong somewhere. For instance, children in the families that change places of residence frequently, often suffer from identity confusion, as a child fails to develop sense of belongingness; unable to relate to a certain society and culture. It also applies to young/adolescent asylum seekers and refugees. As for the need of love, Maslow argues that it shall not be confused with the physiological desire for reproduction. Love, in Maslow's

theory is what Erikson describes as CARE during generosity vs stagnation stage. It is crucially important for one to be loved and to give love and care to someone.

The “highest” needs in Maslow’s hierarchy are *the esteem needs*. Author writes that “all people in our society have a need or desire for stable, firmly based, usually high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, self-esteem and the esteem for others” (Maslow, 1954, p.45, para. 2). Self-esteem, therefore is an initial part of one’s identity, how a person evaluates himself and how he thinks other people evaluate him. Firm self-esteem is important for healthy identity and mental health. Firm self-esteem (not a narcissistic pathology) leads to self-confidence; a person with a strong self-esteem believes in his strength and usefulness for the world. And, contrary, a person with a low self-esteem often feels worthless, helpless and develops sense of inferiority. Low self-esteem, therefore, may lead to depressions and other illnesses such as severe traumatic neurosis (Maslow, 1954).

A need for higher self-esteem results a desire to be respected. Maslow (1954) divides the desire in two components; the desire to excel, to master and the second “desire for reputation or prestige, dominance, recognition, success, glory, importance, dignity, appreciation” (p.45, para. 2). A desire to be respected is common for all human beings and are desirable in many cultures; in one culture, it is respected to be a doctor, in others to be a good hunter and warrior. In many societies, successful career defines social statues and respect. Hence, career is affects self-esteem, and self-esteem affects identity and mental health. Along with esteem needs, career and profession are crucial for *the need for self-actualization*. Self-actualization is a need to actualize the potential, to show the world what he, a person, is capable of. For one person actualization is in being a parent, for another in being a teacher, for the third in being a dancer or a doctor.

A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately at peace with himself. What a man can be, he must be. He must be true to his own nature (Maslow, 1954, p.46, para 2).

Maslow (1954) argues that self-actualized people are healthier, and generally more satisfied with the life; they except the reality around them as it is, and, unlike people who are less actualized, sleep well, eat well, and are more open to other people. People who have a lower sense of self-actualization are more likely to experience depressions and anxieties. Self-actualized

individuals tend to be more are happy, have less judgment and hatred towards themselves and other people. Maslow (1954, p. 156, para. 4) writes that actualizing people tend to be less defensive and aggressive and tend to distance themselves from more negative or asocial people. As actualized individuals are satisfied with themselves and life “hypocrisy and trying to impress in conventional ways” are extraneous to them (Maslow, 1954, p.156, para. 4). Maslow (1954) argued that it is not that actualized people are unfamiliar with sadness, or anger, or anxiety; it is that such individuals recover easier. Actualized person is simply too happy and satisfied to devote attention to what he finds negative.

Self-actualizing people are more spontaneous, creative, kind and unconventional. Maslow (1954) also argues that actualization helps to cope with negative situations better, as actualized people concentrate on positive moments over negative. The author argues that people who are lucky to do what they love for a living, and satisfied with the profession, are more confident; they decide for themselves, rather than being determined by others (Maslow, 1954, p.161, para. 3). Maslow (1954) writes that self-actualization is a true meaning of human development, arguing that once a human is fed, is safe and loved, he inevitably seeks for more in life.

Self-actualizing people have more appreciation to the world around them. They tend to see the world with child’s naiveté, or “newness” (Maslow, 1954). Every dawn, every rainbow, every butterfly seems to be beautiful to them (Maslow, 1954). Every individual has his own spectrum of interests he finds “beautiful”. It maybe music, or art, or gardening, or space and astronomy. Maslow (1954) highlights that self-actualizing people tend to be more esoteric, in a sense of believing in power of thoughts, of energy and positivity. Maslow (1954) uses the German word *gemeinschaftsgefühl* to describe the deepness of feelings a self-actualizing individual can feel in comparison to a less actualized one. It is a deeper feeling of love, devotion, empathy, responsibility and so on.

According to Maslow (1954) self-actualizing are usually democratic people, democratic in a sense that they believe every person has something to offer. They are more accepting of people of different views, cultures, and nationalities. However, the author warns, that this democracy might be a rather superficial one. Self-actualizing people don’t divide people due to their racial, cultural, sexual or other backgrounds, but however, they tend to be rather picky with choosing their social circle, by letting only the “elite” people (per personal understanding of the elite) to be a part of their community. Maslow (1954) also highlights that whilst self-actualizing people can

get along and enjoy with every culture and country-structure, they “resist enculturation and maintain a certain inner detachment from the culture in which they are immersed” (Maslow, 1954, p.171-172, para. 5).

Nonetheless, self-actualizing people are mentally healthier, stronger and happier, than people who for various reasons feel unfulfilled. A person, who cannot do, what he feels is right to him, inevitably will feel unhappy and unsatisfied with other spheres of life. Along with that, dissatisfaction with life makes not actualized people more negative, cynical and judgmental. Maslow (1954) argues that asocial people are often those who failed to actualize. Hence, one can argue that doing what you love is crucially important for one’s happiness. Having a job might satisfy ones need for safety and stability, but a job cannot bring feeling of fulfillment and meaning to life. Maslow (1954) insists that it is important for every human being to actualize, to show his potential and creativity. Creativity, author writes, does not mean creating a song, or drawing a picture. One can show creativity and actualize the potential through being a good assistant, engineer or librarian.

Individuals with a refugee background are not different in this sense. Providing one with a meaningless job might solve the problem of hunger, thirst, sleeping, feeling safe, but it cannot fully make one feeling fulfilled. Career is an essence of self-actualization. In addition, while self-actualization is an essence of one’s mental well-being and happiness it is an essential part of adult life. Every individual shall have a possibility and right for not only work, but to peruse his career aspirations; to realize and fulfill his potential, to peruse his goals and interests. Levinson (1984), who elaborated on Maslow’s work, noticed that self-actualization is not only important for an individual, but for the society. Self-actualizing people are more carrying and productive. They enjoy what they do and work at their best. They work to be useful for the world, to improve and find the new ways of doing what they do. Levinson (1984) highlights that, unfortunately, self-actualized people are less likely to take leaderships roles, unlike those with the higher level of neurosis, who tend to use power to overcome a perceived inadequacy (Levinson, 1984). Hence, self-actualization among refugees is an important aspect to consider, when talking about avoiding social and economics gaps and excluded groups of the society.

Career and self-esteem in relation to refugees

Inability to self-actualize may affect one's identity negatively (Maslow, 1954). Displeasure with an employment status may decrease individual's self-esteem. Maslow (1954) considered it as extremely important for one to do a meaningful job. However, what is a meaningful job? In the research on relation between mental health and meaningful work Allan, Dexter, Kinsey and Parker (2016) refer to Steger (2012) who defined meaningful work as a job that brings pleasure and satisfaction to one's life, leads to a personal growth and gives one a feeling of doing something for a greater good. Hence, referring to Erikson (1950) and Maslow (1954), meaningful work, is work that triggers a sense of generosity and leads to self-actualization.

Every individual has own understanding of meaningful work and ideal career. Ideal career is a job that meets one's interests, values and needs (Allan, Dexter, Kinsey & Parker, 2016, p. 1, para. 4). Meaningful career may not prevent or cure mental health issues, but dissatisfaction with the job may exacerbate one's mental health condition. The authors argue that job satisfaction is a result of combination of skill variety, task identity, task significance, independence and feedback with three psychological states: meaningfulness, responsibility and knowledge of the result (Allan, Dexter, Kinsey & Parker, 2016, p. 2, para. 4) and conclude that job satisfaction is high then, when one finds it meaningful.

As adults in the modern world spend most of the life at work, sense of doing something meaningful, helps to decrease stress levels and increase self-esteem. When it comes to highly educated people, the importance of having meaningful career increases, as the life expectations are higher. In the system where higher education is considered essential for a professional and financial success, inability to find a "perfect job" and need to settle for a less attractive work, negatively affects person's self-esteem. In the case of older employees, and especially refugees, the question of importance of meaningful job increases. Leppel, Brucker and Cochran (2012) write that often employers tend to underestimate working capacities and skills of older employees. If an older employer faces a job loss in older age, the chances to find similar position in the profession are very low, regardless of the knowledge and experience. Often that leads to mental illnesses, depressions or anxiety (2012).

The authors (2012) argue that it is common to assume that older workers are unable to understand, learn or adapt to the new technologies or market. Often employers underestimate older workers and do not wish to invest time and money in them. However, the authors argue that such assumption is often incorrect. According to their findings, high job satisfaction increases

employer's motivation to work and to postpone the retirement. Along with that, older workers show higher work ethics, better decision making, motivation and devotion to work (Leppel, Brucker and Cochran, 2012).

There is a limited research and data about the employment rates among highly educated refugees in Norway. However, Morrice (2012) conducted the relevant research in Great Britain. The author conducted a narrative research among ten highly educated refugees, nine of which had professional experience from the home countries. The author notes that refugees with higher education and professional experience come to a new country with a hope to “*reestablish their professional identities and secure their financial and employment status with a similar profession*” (Morrice, 2012, p. 263, para. 3). The author writes that respondents had faced identity crises due to the loss of previous social status and financial situation. A need to settle for unskilled jobs (cleaning personal, nursing homes, etc.) worsen the situation. The fact that their experiences, education and potential were not recognized in Great Britain, made the respondents feel unworthy and humiliated (Morrice, 2012). The author notes that inability to support their families forced the respondents to apply for social benefits which made them feel ashamed and disgraced. Morrice (2012) concludes that the governmental system fails to recognize human capital of the refugees in Great Britain. The author highlights that the recommendations for refugees are always to study extra, start from the beginning or to improve their skills. However, the author argues that such advice is irrelevant in cases of people with 15 years professional experience.

3.3. Critiques of Erikson and Maslow

While the theory of Erik H. Erikson is fundamental in the field of identity and personality development, it has its critiques. Rosenthal (et al., 1980) argued that the main flaw of Erikson's theory is that the author based it on personal cases from his practice; hence, the theory lacks empirical evidence. Along with that, McLeod (2013, p.5) argued that Erikson's theory describes developmental stages, rather explains why development occurred. McLeod (2008, p.5, para. 5-6) cites Erikson, who referred to his work as “a tool to think, rather than factual analyses”. However, the goal of the paper is not to test the “Theory of the Life Cycles”. The more relevant critique to current thesis is the oversight of female identity development by Erikson.

Sorell and Montgomery (2001) criticized Erikson's view on physiology as a key to psychological development, where Erikson viewed female's “generosity vs. stagnation” crisis, as a crisis of motherhood. Hence, a woman only overcomes crisis when she is a mother. The authors

stressed, “Feminists in general have suggested that grand theories reflect only the experiences and perspectives of those primarily White, middle-class, European and American men who until lately held the center of the intellectual power structure” (Sorell and Montgomery, 2001, p.98, para.2). Franz and White (1985) argued that it is not, that Erikson's theory is a male theory, but rather it fails to explain the social attachment mechanisms of both males and females. The author highlighted, that Erikson himself asked the questions “How the identity formation of women differs from male?”, and concluded, that Erikson does not provide simple or clear answer to “his own question” (Franz & White, p. 226, para.3). The conclusion of Franz and White (1985) is that Erikson assumes, that female and male development is similar, where only from the stage V, social interactions and experiences lead to differences in personal development.

The other critique of Erikson is its lack of relevance to non-western nationalities and ethnicities and cultures. The same critique applies to Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Sneed, Schwartz and Cross (2009) argued that the relevance of Erikson’s stages of identity development to *non-White* ethnicities is unclear; for instance, while it is common for a Hispanic person to have stronger connection with relatives, or “familyism” is often strange for a non-Hispanic, White person (Sneed et al., 2009, p. 78, para.3). Hence, the authors concluded, “Values and behaviors of both majority and minority cultures need to be understood within the cultural context in which they occur” (Sneed et al., 2009, p. 79, para.1).

Ochse and Plug (1986) conducted a research to test validity of Erikson’s theory in a cross-cultural context. The authors tested the theory among 1859 white and black men and women in South Africa. While authors concluded, that Erikson’s theory generally is “acceptable for the research purposes”; the results show that it is more relatable for white population, than for black. “Black men seem to resolve the identity crisis (develop a sense of identity) only after age 40 and there are indications that the psychosocial development of black adult women is frustrated” authors stated (Ochse & Plug, 1986, p.1240, para1). To remind, Erikson (1950, 1964) argued that identity formation occurs during adolescence; hence, authors conclude that Erikson’s theory of identity development should be adjusted in accordance with participant’s racial background, to provide more accurate results (Ochse & Plug, 1986, p.1249, para.7).

Bouzenita and Wood Boulanouar (2016) argued that Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is invalid in cross-cultural context. The authors stated, “Maslow’s model of the hierarchy of needs has been criticized for not being empirically proven and for being universalized on the basis

of American values” (p.76, para.5). The authors view Maslow’s theory as a capitalist dream, where a person is fulfilled when wealthy and in possession of assorted luxury goods. And is particularly irrelevant among Islamic nationalities, where spiritual, non-material values are more important to people. The authors concluded that in the world, where humans live in accordance with Maslow’s hierarchy, no one can be happy, satisfied and, hence, mentally healthy, as needs and wishes will be never-ending (Bouzenita & Wood Boulanouar, 2016, p.76, para. 4-5). However, Koltko-Rivera (2006) argues that while Maslow’s theory is widely used in social sciences, it is misinterpreted. The author argues that Maslow later reviewed the hierarchy and placed self-transcendence above the self-actualization. Self-transcendence is a state, where individual outgrows the basic needs and reaches a bigger perspective, concern for others. A spiritual state of beyond the physical needs, altruism or religiousness.

4. Methodology

4.1. Narrative research method

Narrative method is a type of research based on examination of a story told by a participant /observer of events. In other words, the perception of events by the interviewee. This research is interested in the personal experiences of highly educated refugees in Norway. The importance of integrating refugees into the Norwegian welfare state and labor market is a widely debated topic. However, there is limited discussion about highly educated refugees and their enrolment and access into the professional labor market.

Narratives of refugees with a higher education may give an insight into their lives and experiences. Perception of these experiences may help to indicate what are the main challenges for including immigrants in the professional labor market and what can be done to improve inclusion.

4.2. Limitations of the method

As all research methods, narrative research has its weaknesses. When using the narrative method, the main concern is trustworthiness of the story (Hunter, 2010). Hunter (2010) refers to this as “crisis of validity” and highlights that researcher cannot be sure whether he was told a truth, or if a participant remembers facts correctly (p.44, para.4). Hence, when using narratives a researcher fully relies on the memory of interviewees and honesty of the answers.

4.3. Sampling

The target group of the research is highly educated adults with a refugee background in Norway. Seven people from ages 20 to 52 were interviewed. Six of the interviewees had received higher education in Norway, and one in another country. The interviewees came to Norway as asylum seekers at different ages. Hence, the length of residence in Norway varies greatly. Three of the interviewees were female and four were male. Three of the interviewees have received master degrees, three have bachelor degrees, and one has an unfinished bachelor degree from another country. Along with seven main interviewees, the leader of a local NAV office was interviewed to provide NAV’s view on the issue raised by thesis. The interview with the leader of NAV office is presented in the Chapter 6, and was conducted after the interviews with the immigrants were completed. This interview was therefore based on knowledge generated from the interviews with the immigrants, and several issues from these interviews were brought up.

4.4. Semi-structured interviews

The main interests of this research project is to explore personal narratives and experiences of highly educated adults with a refugee background in Norway. The purpose of the narrative approach is to hear stories and thoughts of interviewees. All the interviews were conducted as semi-structured, where semi-structure gave interviewees a freedom to choose what to share (Bryman, 2015, p.492). The content of the interviews, therefore vary in depth and details, as well as the self-reflection of those interviewed. Interview guides are presented in Appendix 1.

4.5. Ethical concerns

Due to a rather sensitive topic of the research; anonymity, safety and comfort of the respondents were the researcher's prior concern. I received a permission for conducting the interviews from NSD (Norwegian Center for Research Data). All the interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants. The permission was requested verbally. Only one interviewee out of seven did not wish to be recorded. All interviews were deleted after the transcribing process was over.

Per permission from NSD, I avoided direct identifications, such as name, nationality, and country of origin. To provide complete anonymity the participants were referred to as interviewee 1-7. The interviewees are also identified by gender. Countries of origin are referred to as Middle East, Africa, and Europe. Four of the interviewees are from the Middle East, one from Africa and two from Europe. Towns in Norway are referred to as municipalities in the West of Norway or North of Norway. It was important to make interviewees feel comfortable throughout the interview process. The researcher therefore fully avoided asking questions about political, religious beliefs and opinions.

4.6. Secondary data

This research is based on the narratives provided by semi-structured interviews, however, to give a broader context, in Chapter 2, the researcher introduces rules, regulation, and definitions by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI), the Norwegian Directorate of Diversity and Integration (IMDi), the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT). In addition, the researcher refers to the articles provided by Norwegian Statistics (SSB), Norwegian Migration Act of 2008 and the White Paper 2015-2016 written and presented on the official web page of Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

4.7. Researcher's positioning

As a last year master student in a foreign country, I partially share the experiences of the interviewees. I too am about to start looking for a job within my profession and therefore share similar feelings and expectations regarding the future employment with the respondents. As an immigrant in Norway, I am a subject of the immigration policies of Norway. Hence, it was highly important for me to assure that my involvement into the subject would not affect the findings and the research process. I, as a researcher, carefully tried to detach my own state of mind and experiences from the research process and the way I interpret findings.

4.8. Limitations of the research

The main limitation of the findings is a number of respondents. The number of respondents who grew up in Norway is significantly higher than the number of respondents who came to Norway in adult age. Along with that, in a retrospect, it is clear what could have been done differently. For instance, we should have asked male respondents about appropriate educational levels for their potential or actual wives, the Norwegian emphasis on gender equality; and ask female respondents about their views and experiences regarding gender equality in a broader extent. Generally, the subject of the family and marriage should have been discussed more. Along with that, we should have addressed the issue of cultural identity and integration more in depth.

5. Findings

This chapter presents findings from seven semi-structured interviews. The findings are grouped by answers to the research questions and similarities in the answers of interviewees. All interviewees have some kind of higher education, except for **Interviewee 3**, who was unable to finish his degree due to sudden war in his country. **Interviewees 6** and **7** came to Norway at the youngest age, as 2-year-olds, while Interviewee 2 came at the oldest age, 37. Interviewee 2 is also the oldest respondent (52 years). Of all the interviewees 3 were female, and 4 were male.

Interviewee 1 is a 24-year-old female from a country in the Middle East; she came to Norway with a family at the age of 12 and has a master's degree in mechanical engineering from a Norwegian university. **Interviewee 2** is a 52-year-old male from a country in Africa; he came to Norway alone at the age of 37 and has a bachelor's degree in economics from a Norwegian university. **Interviewee 3** is a 26-year-old male from a country in the Middle East; he came to Norway alone at the age of 23 and has an unfinished bachelor's degree in IT engineering from the home country. **Interviewee 4** is a 27-year-old male from a country in the Middle East; he came to Norway with a family at the age of 17 and has a master's degree in petroleum engineering from Norway. **Interviewee 5** is a 31-year-old female from the country in the Middle East; she came to Norway at the age of 10 with her family and has a master's degree in sociology from a Norwegian university. Interviewee 6 is a 26-year-old female from a country in Europe; she came to Norway with a family at the age of two and is a professional photographer. **Interviewee 7** is a 25-year-old male from a country in Europe; he came to Norway with his family at the age of two and has a bachelor's degree as a dental technician.

5.1. Background stories

The subchapter presents broader backgrounds of the interviewees.

Interviewee 1 came to Norway with her family when she was around 11 – 12 years old. Continuing conflict in her homeland made it impossible for her to attend school or to learn to read and write. She started her education after arrival to Norway at the age 12. The interviewee recalls her elementary school years as challenging “because I couldn't speak Norwegian and kids didn't like me that much”. She continues that “the teachers were nice”, but the classmates were unkind “they were doing and saying bad things, they were bullying me, but I didn't understand a lot of things they were saying, because I almost couldn't speak Norwegian”. “It was very hard”, and,

learning Norwegian was difficult “because I didn’t have many friends; the only friends I had were from the other countries, so they did not speak much Norwegian either”. She recalls that middle school “was much easier”, but the classmates kept giving her hard times. “But still it was much better, it was not much bullying at that school, but still, I felt negativity...I felt unwelcomed”. The interviewee mentions that her elder sister, who was 15 at that time, was “bullied much more because she was wearing hijab”.

Her high school years “were difficult too”, but “it was all new students, I did not know any of them from before, so I was glad”. Along with that “my Norwegian became much better by the time of high school”. However, the English language became a new challenge “and, since I couldn’t read or write in my native language, I had to take the third language as well, so I took Spanish”. The university years were difficult, “at school I had to struggle with Norwegian and at the university I had to struggle with English”. “Because of my English, my grades were not great. I was depressed, I thought I was not good enough, I can’t handle it”. Nonetheless, she received a Master of Science degree in mechanical engineering. It worth noticing that she received master's degree at the age of 24, only twelve years after she learned how to read and write for the first time. Currently, she is unemployed and looks for a job within her study field.

Interviewee 2 came to Norway fifteen years ago (at the age of 37) “for the reasons, I am not going to go into the details, but it was because of the political reasons”. The interviewee was in “the exile” once before. “It is the second time...I was in the exile before for eight years in another county in Africa”. “It was fighting in my country...cruelty of a military government... people in my village suffered a lot...so from when I was very little I had to go to exile with my family and I started experiencing a difficult life”. During that time the interviewee joined the resistance “I happened to join a group that was fighting against government...we were going from the office to office, from the embassy to embassy, doing many things”.

After the certain events (the death of his comrade), the interviewee made a decision to return to his home country. However, he was arrested immediately after the arrival “I was detained the minute I landed in the airport”. The interviewee was imprisoned for months, until the Red Cross helped him. “I was helped by the Red Cross...they reported me to the UN and the UN took me to their office...then they helped me to move to a place where no one could detect me or knew who I was. Eventually I was taken to my home village”. After the return to his home village the interviewee tried to live “a quiet life”. “I was living a calm life, I got a job...but I saw sufferings

of people, that they were victimized...it was terrible to see that the place I grew up in was almost destroyed”. That, along with a death of his parents became the “last drop. I started to have problems again”. “I tried to live a quiet life, but even though, I was not trusted. Neither could I find peace with sufferings of people around him”. The interviewee made a decision to flee “I realized I cannot be trusted. I had to leave. Even though I had a good life. I was working, I was earning well. I had to leave my family, my son”.

Interviewee 2:

Because I was working in the city controlled by the government I was treated as a suspect due to my rebellious past...after three years I got arrested again. Put into prison in my hometown. I came out, got my job back. After five years I started to have troubles again. That’s how I found myself in Norway.

The interviewee received the school education in the first country of exile “I had a lot of courses; I took a lot of classes”. By the time, he returned to his home country he was recruited by a humanitarian organization “I actually grew very far within one humanitarian organization. I have worked as a senior administrator”. The interviewee was a senior officer and was responsible for the distribution of aid (mainly food). The interviewee highlights that English is his mother tongue. Along with Norwegian, the interviewee speaks four languages. The interviewee received his first university degree in Norway. He entered the bachelor’s program during the first years in Norway.

The interviewee tried to find a job within the profession after the graduation. However, he never succeeded “every time I apply for a job in correspondence with my education and experience I don’t get any reply at all...even when I go personally to the offices and ask, I get a no”. “I have been in Norway for fifteen years and even by now I haven’t used the degree I studied on my Bachelor. I just don’t use it at all”. Currently, he studies at the master program in Economics, hoping to find a job within the field.

Interviewee 3 came to Norway two years ago. Due to a sudden war in his home country, the interviewee fled to Norway and “received my approval after four months in Norway...I knew I will get the residence, because of a really bad situation in my home country, so all the people from my country normally get an approval from UDI”. He received the school education in the home country. During the second year of the bachelor program, his education was disrupted by

war. The interviewee was 23 when he arrived to Norway. As he started at the university right after school, he did not have work experience “except some volunteering in the refugee camp at home”. Hoping to continue his disrupted university education in Norway, he applied for the recognition of foreign education to NOKUT. However, the application was unsuccessful “I was aware that it wouldn’t be approved because it was a private university and I didn’t graduate, but I still tried”.

The interviewee notes, “It is very hard to fulfill the requirements in order to continue education as a newly arrived refugee”. The main requirements are “to prove the Norwegian and English skills at the university level, that is not that hard, but to fulfill the Norwegian language requirement you have to become a part of integration program at first, which is two years, and even then you may have to go to high school first”. The interviewee, who lives in Norway for more than two years learned Norwegian rather fast (by the time of the interview his oral Norwegian was nearly fluent). The interviewee started to learn Norwegian on his own from the first days at the camp “I knew I will get the residence because of the dramatic situation in my country, so I started to learn Norwegian from the first day by my own...I found an online course, and it helped me a lot that I spoke some English”.

Currently, the interviewee works at five part-time jobs. One of them “at the electronics store”, which is to some extent relevant to the profession. He wishes to continue his education one day. Currently the interviewee concentrates on work, to support his family who sought refuge in another country. The interviewee shares that his main goal is to earn enough money to be financially independent and to support his family “I wanted to get a job as soon as I can, and not stay at home and live off the money provided by Norwegian government”. He describes his current life to be very stressful, but is grateful for what he has “because in my country we lived in many worth conditions”. As a newly arrived refugee, Interviewee 3 is the only respondent who participates in the introduction program and is in strong contact with NAV.

Interviewee 4 came to Norway when he was seventeen and lives in Norway for ten years. He received primary and secondary school education in his home country. He continued the education in Norway with two years in high school. After high school, he entered a five-year master study in petroleum engineering. While he knows English, he preferred to study in Norwegian “because, as I said, Norwegian is very important if you want to live and work in Norway”. The interviewee graduated from the university with excellent grades (average of A).

However, he was unable to find a job within the profession “I tried, but I couldn’t, so I decided to change my major a little”. Currently he takes another master program while looking for jobs.

Interviewee 5 moved to Norway throughout the family reunion when she was 10 years old and lives in Norway for 20 years now. She received education in Norway and has a master’s degree in sociology. She looks for a job within the field of study, but have not succeeded yet. Currently she works part-time in the kindergarten. However, the interviewee does not think that her inability to find a job is related to her background “because the market is just bad in Norway right now”. She is very positive about her experiences in Norway and does not think about her refugee background “I respect and love my native culture, but I grew up in Norway and most of my friends are Norwegian, so I feel more than integrated. Norway is home”.

Interviewee 6 came to Norway with her family when she was two years old and does not remember much about her first years in Norway. However, she recalls living in the asylum center somewhere in the East of Norway with her family and then relocating to a small town in the Western part of Norway. The interviewee shares that her family “was very accepted by the locals; everybody was ready to help, be there for us”. “So I felt more different, but never discriminated”. As “there were very few refugee families” and that her family is from Europe, it was easier for them to integrate, and for locals to welcome them “I think people don’t like when someone who is too different”. The interviewee shared that she always felt Norwegian “I remember, when I was little, I was irritated when people asked me about my background because I felt so Norwegian”.

The interviewee received her education in Norway and has a bachelor's degree in photography “and now I am at my “år studium”, a year studies...maybe after that, I will take a master”. After high school, she decided to study at the “folkehøgskolen”. “Normally the program is for one year, but since I liked it so much, I stayed there for two years. During the second year, I took a big internship with one of the leading publishers”. Later she worked at a newspaper for three years and a year as a freelancer “but then I realized, oh my God, what I am doing, so I decided to take some courses”. Currently, the interviewee studies media science “because with my bachelor degree you can only work as a freelancer jobs, but I don’t like freelance life, so I try to get an extra education to get a more stable job”.

Interviewee 7 came to Norway when he was two years old. At first the family stayed «in the middle of nowhere for 2-3 month and then moved to a small city in North of Norway». He received all of his education in Norway. After finishing high school, he started a bachelor’s degree

in economics “but I didn’t find it very interesting, so I quit”. Later, he received bachelor’s degree as a dental technician. However, he regrets it “I felt like I wasted three years”. “I didn’t find it very interesting, so I didn’t work to this degree”. The interviewee switched the major one more time and started a new program. However, half a year after he decided, “To just take some random subjects”. “For two years I didn’t really know what to do, just being a student, living life”. Currently he is at first year of bachelor’s degree in engineering.

He does not remember much from his first years in Norway, but recalls, “For my parents it was difficult to learn Norwegian”. “For my mother it was more difficult than for my dad, because my father had more education....and also his first job in Norway required a lot of personal communication in Norwegian”.

The interviewee is very positive about his experiences in Norway and does not recall any difficulties with integration. “It might be because it was not many refugees in my city...and the city was kind of small, so everyone knew everyone”. He shares a story of their resettlement to Norway.

Actually, one thing I forgot to tell you is how we got to Norway. My aunt and uncle who moved to Norway before us met a journalist, who wanted to help someone. He did not know whom to help, so he asked my aunt and uncle if they knew someone who wanted to come to Norway, and they told him about us. So that’s how we got here. He paid for the airplane travel and everything else. I think the overall spent 200 000 NOK to help us to move and settle in Norway.

The interviewee thinks, “We were so easily integrated to Norway because my family is from Europe”; “also, the city I am from has both Muslims and Christians, so I grew up understanding both cultures very well, I think that what made it easier to integrate”.

5.2 RQ1. Do highly educated adults with a refugee background find jobs relevant to their education?

The main finding of the research is that none of seven interviewees has a full-time relevant to an education. **Interviewee 1** responded, “I applied for ten positions, and I got a reply from three of them, but I still hope to find a job”. Currently she takes different courses “not to waste time while I am looking for a job...but if I’ll find one I quit the university”. **Interviewee 2**, who came

to Norway with work experience from a big humanitarian organization and speaks both Norwegian and English, says, “I still can’t get a job”. He responded, “I have to be very honest. I thought that if I finish that degree (bachelor’s degree in economics at one of the universities in Norway) I would definitely get a job...but no. Every time I try to apply for a job in a correspondence with my education and experience I get a “No” or no reply at all”. The interviewee added that “even when I personally go to the offices and ask I get a no. Even the simplest jobs we cannot get. With all the qualifications even the simplest jobs we cannot get”.

Interviewee 3 replied “I tried to explain to my case officer, that I would like to work with something more closely related to the computers and IT, but he (the case worker) says that I can’t get a job in a places like that, because you need a higher education and youth isn’t approved (by NOKUT)”. He shared that the “case officer” often reminds him “the first job in Norway is never a dream job and that I should just take any job I can”. The interviewee works at “five jobs, but they are all part-time. It is really exhausting and tiring. I am afraid I will get sick, but I have to do that in order to protect my future. I need to earn money to support and provide for my family who fled to Turkey”. **Interviewee 4** replied, “I worked in small jobs, I haven’t been working within my profession yet”. He notes that he tried to find a job after graduation “I tried, but I couldn’t find any, that is why I decided to change my major a little. It was like 150 of us who graduated that year and only five of us got jobs”.

Interviewee 5 responded, “I applied, but I haven’t heard any positive replies yet. It is either “no” or no reply at all. She currently has a part-time job, not related to her studies. **Interviewee 6** replied “I took a half a year internship with a big newspaper...I worked a lot for the newspaper, and after that, I worked for two years just as a photographer”. She shared that generally it is difficult to get a full-time job within her field “As a photographer, you can only get freelance jobs, but I don’t like freelance life because it is stressful. You do not know when will you get the next job and you cannot plan anything. So right now, I am trying to get an extra education to get a more stable job”. **Interviewee 7** currently has a job not relevant to his degree. He replied, “I tried to find jobs, but couldn’t; the problem with jobs within my degree is that majority of them are outsourced to China and Taiwan. I got offered one job, but I didn’t like it because it was part-time and a job I already had was paid much better”.

Norwegian language as the main challenge on the way to employment

One of the main similarities in the answers is the Norwegian language as the main challenge for refugees in Norway. Majority of respondents agrees that it is crucial to be fluent in Norwegian to work in Norway. **Interviewee 1** considers learning Norwegian as the biggest challenge in Norway. Her school years were “very difficult because I couldn’t talk Norwegian”. In high school, when her Norwegian skills became much more advanced “it was still hard, even though I spoke Norwegian, I still couldn’t understand some words and I couldn’t translate this unknown words because the only language I could read and write in was Norwegian”. She shared that her parents are facing difficulties “because they can’t speak Norwegian that well. If you don’t have education and you can’t speak Norwegian, then it is very difficult to live here...it’s hard”.

Interviewee 2 named “the language problem” to be the main difficulty first years in Norway. He shared “luckily enough I got admitted to a university college, where I did my bachelor’s. But sometimes I’m regretting it because back then I didn’t know the language of the country that well, so some of my courses didn’t go that well”. Further in the interview, while discussing his job-searching experiences, the interviewee said:

Is it the language? If it is the language, then the only way one can improve it by working. You interacting with people. Then you can get a chance to learn more. Yes, I had a course, but that is not enough to improve Norwegian. And yes, when I was studying I got a job at the bakery, but mostly everyone there speaks English.

Interviewee 3 said “learning Norwegian is the most difficult thing, it is not something you can do over a short time and it’s hard to find a job because knowing Norwegian is the main requirement”. He shared his experience:

I started learning Norwegian from the first day by my own. I found a course on the internet. And I could speak some English, so that helped me a lot. But I would not say to people that I can speak English. Because then they would not speak Norwegian to me. So, Norwegian people don’t think how they could help. Because if they see the opportunity to speak English, they would not, actually, be patient to hear very bad Norwegian and speak English instead.

The interviewee talked about his perception of the Introduction program. As Interviewee 2, Interviewee 3 talked about “minor and unskilled jobs” that refugees normally “get through NAV”. He shared his experiences:

The language course is like 2 hours a day, kind of 10 or 12 hours a week, and that’s in my mind it’s not enough at all, it’s not enough to learn Norwegian. And they try to send you as a ‘practicant’ (intern) to, something like food, ‘matbutikk’ (grocery store)... They said to me” your higher education is not approved yet, so you should get some experience, you should know how things work in Norway, so you should... you should practice the Norwegian language, and they send me to MacDonald’s, as a ‘språkpraksis’ (language practice), and in McDonald’s they just told me, you know, you don’t need to speak Norwegian, the job was just dish washing and, it’s like you don’t have to speak Norwegian.

Along with that, the interviewee finds the amount of Norwegian courses insufficient to fulfill the language requirements for university education “but you can’t actually learn the whole language, it takes a lot of time. And I actually have to stay in Norway; if I can’t use my Norwegian to study in Norway, so what else could I use it for?”

Interviewee 4 started the interview with “I’ll tell you right ahead that it is hard for non-Norwegian people to find a job because they mostly likely don’t speak Norwegian that well... I think language is the main issue”. He shared that he intentionally chose to study in Norwegian at the university, to improve his knowledge of the language and firmly believes that one cannot succeed in Norway without fluency in Norwegian. **Interviewees 6 and 7** who moved to Norway with their families in early childhood, consider Norwegian as a native language. However, **Interviewee 6** shared “When I was applying for just a random job, not in the photography, I was always delivering my applications in person. Because I know that my name is different, so people might assume that I don’t speak Norwegian that well”.

Pressure to study better than non-refugees and Norwegians

Another finding is that a lot of respondents feel the pressure to have a better grades than native Norwegians. **Interviewees 2 and 4** firmly believe that it is an essence for refugees to have

excellent grades to be considered for hiring. **Interview 2**, who is from a country in Africa, shared his thoughts:

I can just add, it's not easy for us, it's not. And, as I was told once, 'you should know what you look like'. And looking like we do, we should be best at everything. If majority gets a B, we should get an A. If they get C, you shall get B. If they get D, you should get C. You should always be the best at everything. Then you may be considered.

Later in the interview, he added, "Yes, I think I should study better than Norwegians". "You have to be the best. The way we look is our negative side. Then, if the results are not very impressive, that is the next negative side. Then, if the language is also poor then it's the third one". **Interviewee 4** shared "for me, I feel like I must get a better grade than Norwegians, to compensate, you know. In my opinion, how I feel, I must be better. If Norwegian gets a C, I must get a B". **Interviewee 1** shared "Yes, of course. My parents were always saying, "you have to get an education; you have to be someone". "Being a good student made me feel more integrated to Norway. And my parents felt the same. Also, Norwegian students had parents who could help them with the homework, and I didn't get any help, because my mom is uneducated and my father couldn't speak English that well, so I had to work on my own, harder than anyone else". **Interviewees 5 and 6** did not discuss the subject, while **Interviewee 7** responded, "As long as my background isn't in the question, I think that doesn't matter, but if they look at my background and feel that they need to take into consideration, then I feel like that would be a problem".

Connections as important factor to find a job in Norway

An interesting similarity in the answers is that personal connections and contacts help to find a job in Norway. **Interviewee 1** shared her experience "For the first time I tried to apply for a job when I was in high school. And it was very difficult. Because you don't have any experience, and you need to have a connection to find any job". "Luckily, my sister was working at the care center for adults at the time, so she introduced me to her boss and that how I got my first job". **Interviewee 4** shared "When I just came here, I was just agreeing to any job I could have gotten. Because what is also important in Norway is good references". He also finds references from the employers to be very important "in the beginning of my life here, I had several small jobs and this

jobs provided me with references. And it was a very good thing. References are the most important thing. Before anyone will give you another job”.

Interviewee 6 said “almost every job I have had I got because of my connections and the network. And it is very important in Norway”; “employers are more open if you are recommended by someone”. She added, “Especially my field (photojournalism) is dependent on connections and contacts. So, it is more difficult for those refugees who came here as an adult because they might not know that many people”. “Employment in Norway is more about your connections, experiences and your past works”.

5.3. RQ2: Do highly educated adults feel that refugee background affects employers will to hire them?

Interviewee 1, graduated from a university last spring and currently takes “single courses” subjects, while looking for a job within the profession. She shared her job-seeking experience:

I was trying to apply for the internships and summer jobs within the studies, but I never succeeded. It is difficult. But it is not because of my refugee background, I think it is the market situation as well, it is bad right now. And I haven’t felt any prejudices, or at least I don’t think it is difficult for me to find a job because of different my name, or my background. But I have heard that some people face difficulties because of their nationality and name, but I personally have never faced it. My study is related to the oil industry, and the industry generally is crashing now, so I think that is more the reason.

She also added “I applied for 10 positions, and I got invite for the interview from three of them, so I still hope to find a job”. Later in the interview she shared her observation:

But, however, I see in Oslo every day that often refugees have to settle down for a minor, unskilled jobs. But, on the other hand, I understand why would they prefer Norwegians for some positions. Or, I can’t understand it, but I can see, how they want their own people. There definitely are stereotypes regarding people with refugee background, and some people believe in it. But of course not everyone.

Overall, **Interviewee 1** does not think that her background affects her employment prospects. **Interviewee 4**, who also graduated last spring, currently takes another master's degree, due to the inability to find a job within the profession. Like Interviewee 1, his degree is related to the oil industry. He connects low employment opportunities to "the bad economic situation in the oil industry". To the question whether he thinks that the refugee background influences his employment chances, the interviewee responded:

You know, every foreigner in Norway feels that anyway, but I don't think that that is a reason. That is the problem with foreigners, if they don't get the job they always blame it on discrimination, they would say "oh, that is because I am not Norwegian. I don't think that's the case...maybe it is because I didn't have straight A's, maybe because of that. Because of all the people with an average of A, they got jobs. But people who have B in average, they didn't get the jobs. But, of course, some employers prefer Norwegian, and some don't care. It depends on where you apply to. It is ok, though. It is their country; they can do whatever they want.

Interviewee 5 responded, "No, I don't think that I can't find a job because of my name or background". **Interviewee 6** highlighted that it generally is difficult to have a full-time job within her field of specialty (photography). Currently she takes extra courses to increase her chances for a full-time employment. She does not think that her refugee background is a reason for unemployment. "I never felt like I was not getting jobs because of my looks, my name or a background; it is, of course, may be different, if you send your job application online or by post and they see that your name is different". She added, "When I was applying for just a random job, not in my field, I was always delivering my applications in person. Because I know that my name is different, so people might assume that I don't speak Norwegian that well". **Interviewee 7** responded, "I think I understand what you were asking about, but I don't think I had any issues getting a job, because of my background". He stressed that people rarely assume that he is not Norwegian "My name isn't that difficult, it's kind of a European name. People are kind of surprised when I tell that I'm not Norwegian". However, he added:

I've had for a lot of part time jobs where I never got an answer from, and my sister also has the same problem, she's tried to apply for jobs last year, hasn't got any replies. She has the same last name as me, but her name is even more European than mine.

The main finding by itself is that, the individuals who came to Norway in early childhood or adolescence, have a more positive experiences and higher expectations for the future career, than those who came to Norway as an adult. The first group, are interviewees 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Interviewees number 2 and 3 came to Norway as adults and have far more negative perception on experiences in Norway. At the same time, none of the interviews from the first group relates unemployment to any kind of discrimination or prejudices, unlike Interviewees 2 and 3. The subchapter 5.3.1. presents findings for the Interviewees 1, 4- 7; findings for the Interviewees 2 and 3 are presented in the subchapter 5.3.2.

Have highly educated refugees ever felt discriminated, indignified or hurt while applying for jobs in Norway? Narratives and experiences.

This subchapter presents narratives about the discrimination and experiences in Norway of the Interviewees 1, 4-7, who came to Norway in childhood and have a more positive experiences than **Interviewees 2 and 3. Interviewee 6 and 7** have the most positive experiences in Norway. Both of them think that the attitude towards refugees was more positive 25-30 years ago, as the number of refugees was significantly lower. **Interviewee 6** shared her thoughts:

Maybe because it was very few refugee families, when we came here, we were very accepted and welcomed by the locals. Right now, there are many Syrian refugees coming there (interviewee's hometown in Norway), and it is not the same anymore. I think, when a lot more people started to come, and with a general situation in the world with raising nationalistic moods, it is a lot more negativity, then when we came there. Now there is an asylum center in my hometown, which is very new, it wasn't there when we moved, and it is a lot of Syrians there. And I don't think that they experience the same warmth we received from the locals. Because when we just moved there everyone was ready to help, be there for us. So when I was little, I felt more different, but not discriminated.

Along with that, both **Interviewee 6** and **7** think that it is easier for the refugees from European countries, as they are. **Interviewee 6** answered, “I think people don’t like when someone is too different. Like wearing hijab or doesn’t eat pig.... plus, my family was very integrated, and we are white, so people sometimes don’t realize that I am not Norwegian”. She added, “My name is also very neutral, so sometimes people would add me on a Facebook and see that my last name is different and only after that ask me where am I from. My background is not the first thing people think of when they meet me”. To the question, whether he believes that he has equal employment opportunities to people with a non-refugee background, the interviewee answered, “Yeah, I do. Hope so”.

Interviewee 7 shared, “I remember when arriving at my home time for the first time there weren't that many refugees, the city is kind of small”. He highlights that that the family was “very welcomed”; “I think the reason was that there weren't that many refugees, and it was a small town, and everybody wants to help and know who you are”. He shared a warm memory “I think the first day we got there, we were invited to a big party at some Norwegians house, we were drinking for three days straight”. Later he shared the story of how his family arrived to Norway.

Actually, one thing I forgot to tell you is how we got to Norway. My aunt and uncle who moved to Norway before us met a journalist, who wanted to help someone. He didn’t know whom to help, so he asked my aunt and uncle if they knew someone who wanted to come to Norway, and they told him about us. So that’s how we got here. He paid for the airplane travel and everything else. I think the overall spent 200 000 NOK to help us to move and settle in Norway.

Generally, the interviewee feels very welcomed in Norway, “We still got friends there, that we know that still come visit us here, and we visit them that are Norwegians; the fact that there were so few refugee families helped very much with the integration”.

Interviewee 5 responded “I feel more than welcomed here”. Later, she elaborated on her answer, “I have noticed increased wave of negativity, not towards me directly, but towards refugees and asylum seeker generally...you see it on the news and read it in the newspapers”. However, she highlighted that “I have never felt any discrimination or prejudices towards me”. As for job-seeking experience, she answered ““I only apply online, so no, I don’t face any

discrimination...but I don't know, maybe it will be different when I'll start applying in person".

Interviewee 4 answered, "I feel very welcomed, in fact, that is a nice thing about this country, and it has been very welcoming to me". He continued, "I don't know, I may face discrimination sometimes, but maybe I have been interpreting it in a wrong way, foreigners always think that we are discriminated, but it is not always a case".

Have highly educated refugees ever felt discriminated, indignified or hurt while applying for jobs in Norway? Narratives and experiences.

Interviewee 2 and **3** have the most negative experiences and believe that they experienced discrimination in Norway. This subchapter presents their narratives about experiences in Norway. **Interviewee 3** came to Norway is the only respondent who participates in the introduction program and who talked about IMDi and NAV. To remind, the interviewee has an unfinished bachelor's degree in IT from a University in his home country. He was on the second year of a program, when his education was disrupted by war. The interviewee hoped to continue the education in Norway and applied for the verification of foreign education to NOKUT. However, the application was unsuccessful. He shared "I couldn't finish my study because of the war and because it was the private university, I didn't get the grades approved from NOKUT". He noted that

If I want to study again, I have to start from scratch. I should go to high school again...and there are a lot of other requirements that are very hard to fulfill, there are language requirements that need to be approved, and you have to take part in the integration program.

The interviewee shared his thought about the introduction program "I don't know what they think...it feels like they are thinking about saving money as much as they can, that is why for example, they cut off a lot of hours for Norwegian courses". He also feels that "the advisors are more interested in putting them into the labor market and finding them any job, rather they are interested in helping us go back to the university".

The Interviewee, who "started to learn Norwegian from the first day of the camp", made a decision to leave the camp and not to relocate to a smaller municipality in Northern Norway. He explained, "I wasn't thinking about getting benefits and money from the state, I just wanted to start work as fast as possible, and in the small place I was assigned to, it was more difficult to find

a job than in Oslo, so I decided to stay”. The interviewee shared “I wanted to work as fast as possible, my family is in the asylum camp in another country, and they need help monthly”. After leaving the camp, he lost the right to take part in the integration program. However, the interviewee tried to appeal, “The rules aren’t clear, different person in IMDi was saying a different thing”. He suspects that IMDi intentionally prefers to call back, rather than send an email. He shared his thoughts:

Actually they don’t answer if you send a mail, they will prefer to calling you, I just send a mail, they calling me, and I can’t actually prove that they told me something. And this is very frustrating, I called around ten times and talked to ten different people, and everyone told me a different story. Someone told me that “you don’t have any rights anymore, you are out of the camp, you don’t have any rights anymore, don’t call us”; some other ones told me “you moved to Oslo so they don’t have any responsibility for me now, so you should call the MD in Oslo”; I called the MD in Oslo, and they told me “you still registered in another municipality, we don’t have anything to do with you”

The interviewee shared his experience with a job search in Norway. He said, “When they (NAV) try to find jobs for us (refugees), they always send us to something like “matbutikk” or restaurants”. He continued:

I told my case worker that I would like to work within the field of IT, but he says, there you could not get a job because you need a higher education and yours isn’t approved. Often with NAV, even if you think that you have a qualification and experience, they tell you that you don’t. Refugees don’t have a paper to prove that they worked their whole life as a carpenter, so then we are not qualified to work in Norway. So they always say, “no, you can’t work there, you should study to learn, or work in supermarket or cleaning” and that “your first work in Norway can’t be your dream job, you should just work as a “hva som helst” (anything)”. It’s difficult, but they case workers or consultants, they have their own ideas, or their own beliefs, as refugees you should not work there, you are not born in Norway, so you should start in these places, work in supermarkets, or kiwi, rema 1000.

Eventually the interviewee found a job at the electronics shop by himself “and then I realized, it’s not any different from working in any other supermarket, it’s the same selling and serving customers, so why should we only work at the supermarkets?”. The interviewee argued that situations like that demotivates refugees:

At the supermarket you maybe will get a contract after being a “praktikant” (intern) for three months, and the salary is 130 NOK per hour, and we receive 90 NOK from NAV per hour, so a lot of people thinking “why shall I work then?”, you earn the same if you work and if you don’t.

Along with that, Interviewee 3 addressed the issue, when often employers are taking advantage of the system:

I received a job offer at the grocery store and the owner wanted me to be an intern for six months, without signing a contract with me, because he wants to see how I work. And six month is way too long for being an intern and then risk not getting a position. After all, cause during this trial six months it will be NAV, who will pay my salary, not the owner, so he would just get a free workforce. And a lot of case workers are on the side of the employer, because employer can always hire someone who speaks Norwegian and lives in Norway his whole life, and people don’t want to say anything to NAV, because NAV might think that you don’t want to work, you just want to get stuff.

The interviewee continued, “I have five jobs now. It is very stressful, I am afraid I will get sick, but I have to earn money to help my family”. The interviewee looks exhausted and shares that five jobs do not leave him much time for the rest. His goal is to continue his education one day and work within his profession (IT), “but every time I ask the counselors about going back to school, I don’t get an answer”.

Sometimes it makes me feel that they intentionally try to keep refugees on the level of unskilled workers. They just try to keep newly arrived refugees unskilled or away from education. I fell that they want us to work only in supermarkets and let Norwegian people work in the offices.

The interviewee shared a story about “lønnstilskudd”, the practice when employer and NAV share the full-time wage of the candidate equally, as interviewee explained:

I got a chance to work in IT in the firm and I work their part time, and because I learned Norwegian very fast and that I was motivated and have IT background, they offered me 100% job, if they could get some help from NAV. I applied for lånstilskudd from NAV, and I was kind of shocked, because the answer was: you can speak Norwegian, you are “overqualified” you can work other places, “du er ikke i målgruppen, for vi kan ikke tilby deg lånstilskudd siden du kan jobbe andre steder (you are not in the target group, since you can work other places)

Interviewee 3 argued, “If you read the statistics, it would say that 70 percent of the refugees are in work or in education. But they don’t write what kind of work, one day in a week, it could be on the weekends, it could be one day a month”. The interviewee mentioned “I have a mentor and he told me “you are not going to find to get a job in Norway as long as your name is this obviously Middle Eastern”. And, “You must change it, because if you will apply for a job together with Ole or Hans, they will prefer them”. He continued, “It’s true, if you don’t speak Norwegian or English, no one would want to hire you for a good job, but when you constantly hear it from your counselor in NAV it demotivates you, it makes you feel worthless”. And, “Often refugees are afraid to complain, because in our countries government doesn’t react on complaints well, and they don’t know how it works in Norway, so they afraid if they complain, they will lose their right to be here”.

Talking about the importance of motivation, Interviewee 3 said “it is understandable that NAV is trying to be more realistic and objective, no one will higher you for your experience if you don’t speak Norwegian fluently”. But added:

When you don’t have the self-confidence and when you think I don’t have same qualifications as others, I would not try to get it. You know, it’s all about motivation in my mind. In NAV, people are very far away to get people motivated. They say the truth as it is. You know, “we understand you would like that, but that would not work here”. Finished.

So, people are thinking, why should I work? Why? If I can only work in cleaning, in supermarket, why should I work? If I can't get education approved? Why then? When I could just stay home and get 100 kroner from NAV and I will just participate in this course (the introduction program).

To the question whether he feels pressured, the interviewee replied “a lot, considering that I need to work to have my family, and because I left, I am not receiving any money from the state, so I really can't lose a job”. He described his work:

I work in several places, at the electronics store I have one or two days a week. I have worked in the IT company 50 hours a week, but now I work less, because I am thinking about taking English lessons. I work as a guard in school three days a week. Every 2 weeks, or 6 days a month, I work with the commune. 1 day a week as an interpreter. But you can imagine it's stressful, when I should after all learn Norwegian and English by my own, without any courses pay for taking the exams, that are very expensive. Both exams cost around 4000 NOK, and I save most of my income for my family.

He shared, “when I tried to contact IMDi in Oslo about getting Norwegian language courses they told me “you already speak Norwegian, so you are not eligible”, and yeah, I speak Norwegian, but it's not that good, it is not a university level”. And added, “it is ironic that they consider me overqualified for courses or for “lønstilskudd” from NAV, but when I ask about continuing my studies at the university they say that don't have all the qualifications». To the question whether he is homesick, the interviewee replies:

Actually, if you would compare the situation in my home country we had a good life, education was free for all, but we had kind of dictatorship. We couldn't say what is on our mind to the government. And the government was corrupted...for instance there was a minority and they had more privileges. It was a lot of corruptions. We have laws and rules, but no one follows them. It was a life for the rich. You can pay, then you can get away with anything. If you need something, then you need to pay. But you know, when I came to Norway, I was thinking that the most important thing here is equality, the law and the rules.

Now I know that a lot of rules here are hard to understand, they are confusing. So, the difference between my home country and Norway is, in Syria you can bribe to get your rights, but you can't complain. Here you can't bribe, but you can't get your rights, and you can complain, but you shouldn't.

He explained his thought more detailed by adding:

In the beginning, I was just thinking that, if I was the one who complained all the time to my contact person (in NAV), I would not give them a good impression, and I would not get the possibility to work with them. So now, I have a contract with them. But if I were that person who complained, and you know, you don't work, you don't study, and then you considered as a person with bad behavior, because you don't do anything and only complain. So, maybe they would consider me as a dangerous person, maybe they say, "Yeah we maybe give him the course in English, but we're not interested in hiring him at all". So, you understand, we must choose, either to complain, to say things about the regulations and rules, or about how frustrating are policies towards refugees, or you have to choose to be silent.

He continued:

"They just see refugees as a problem, not as resources, but as problems. And how they should do their best to make less attractive to refugees". And added:

I have jobs now; I have a kind of access to everything Norwegian people have. And yes, the law doesn't say that refugees are not equal to Norwegian people, or to other people in Norway. But it is about how people practice the law, about the Norwegian culture, how the thing works in Norway. These are challenging for refugees; integration in Norway. And it's a kind of hindering you, you just think "I'm stuck, I can't, I can't, I would like to work, but I can't. I would want to speak Norwegian, but I don't have anyone to speak Norwegian too". And in NAV they have these kind of courses, how to write your CV, they only give examples for the "jobbsøknad på Kiwi, jobbsøknad på Rema" (names of the grocery stores in Norway). They have the impression that we are here to work only in supermarkets and restaurants, not in the professional fields, or related to our working experience.

He highlighted, “Of course you can’t say that it is always a case, because there are refugees that work in universities as a researches, there are some refugees are doctors in Norway”. “But you know, there is no focus on them. Media and reports are always talking about the refugees who speak poor Norwegian, refugees who refuses to work”. The interviewee explained that it seems to him that the government intentionally focuses on uneducated refugees; those who does not wish to work, to maintain a negative image and make Norway less attractive for asylum seekers. “Yeah, people think that refugees are the main problem, and that Norway should not have more refugees, because you know it affects our welfare state, or our welfare system”

Interviewee 2 came to Norway at the age of 37 from the countries in Africa as a political refugee (see 5.1). However, to remind the reader, for several years the Interviewee worked as a senior officer in a humanitarian organization in his home country. Along with long professional experience, he has a bachelor’s degree in economics from Norway. The interviewee peaks four language and English as his native language. He was not able to find a job relevant to his experience or degree in 15 years in Norway. Interviewee 2 shared his story:

I must be very honest. I thought that if I'll finish that degree than I will get a job. But no. Every time I try to apply for a job in correspondence with my education and experience I get a no, or no reply at all. The reasons...I don't know. But i suspect it has something to do with my background, with my name, with where I come from. Sometimes I wonder if it is because of my color. Is it the language? If it is the language, then the only way one can improve it is by working. You interacting with people. Then you can get a chance to learn more.

The interviewee continued, “Even when I personally go to the offices and ask personally, I get a no”. “Just last year I decided to receive a truck-driving license, so I can work in the store. I received a license for truck and started applying. And I still got a no”. He continued the monolog with a rhetorical question “So is it a language? Is it me? Or is it the look?” Then added, “You know, the biggest difficulty people of my color face is our look and where we come from. I am not afraid to say that. You can almost read it from somebody's face that we are almost unwelcome”.

And you know, most of the times we looking for some jobs, not because we want to stay here. It's because we hope that one day everything is going to get better at home. But even the simplest jobs we cannot get. With all the qualifications, even the simplest jobs we cannot get. So, what are the things we can do here? That's why you start thinking, maybe if I'll go home one day, I'll be happy.

The interview with an Interviewee 2 took a form of a monolog from the beginning. The interviewee had a lot to share and very little questions needed to be asked. Throughout his monolog, the Interviewee slowly moved to the topic of **identity and importance of career in life**. He said, “That is why those who came here just for study go right back home after they finish an education, because they know at home they will not struggle there they will be somebody different”. And added:

If I were at home, I would be somebody different to. Even today, I live with the hope that one day a change at home will be for the better. So, I can go back home. Because even when I lived in a bit of fear of the government, because of what I've done, I was happy, because I was earning money, I bought a house. I felt relaxed.

He continued:

For the people with our looks it is a problem. Yes, there are people who came here just to study, not to seek asylum, but for them it is easier, because they know that they can go back to their home country anytime”. For refugees, it's different. We are here because we couldn't stay in our country. We come here, we have no option. We must live here. And when you are in this situation you want to do something for this country, for its economics, for yourself. You simply want to do something.

The interviewee added, “Because you cannot work, you cannot study, you cannot go back, it is difficult to put your life together”. The monologue continued. It seemed important to give the Interviewee freedom to choose what to share. It is obvious that the interviewee reflected on his life a lot. After a pause, he added:

Interviewee 2

Because you cannot work, you cannot study, you cannot go back it's difficult to put your life together. It's even worth if you have studied, but you can't find a job or go back home. Then you ask yourself "what is my life"? "What is my life actually"? Sometimes you ask "what am I living for?". For what? Sometimes I just feel shall I just go somewhere? But if I go there then what will I do there? In this country, we just want to work here, to do something, to pay taxes, to help the country to develop. Because one day, when there is peace in our countries we will just go back, without giving anything back to Norway. So, our lives are built on hope. Yes, education you can get, but not a job. Unless you are extremely lucky.

He then shared the experience of applying for a job in the store:

I remember one time I went to the office in the store, where we wanted to work. The lady in the office refused for me to work as a truck driver. And they gave a job to someone else. And I started to think, is it a bad luck? Is it only me? Or is it all the people like me? Whenever I tried to find a job, it was just no and no and no. After the truck story, I went home and cried. I didn't cry with tears, but I cried internally. Ever since, now there is always a pain inside of me. I wish my country would change more. Then the minute it happens, I will just book a plane and fly back home. I will just go back the same day. The freedom of being at home, going back home anytime you want is everything. Many people do not know that, but when this freedom is taken away from you, you are not a human being. You are not. You live, but you are not yourself. And that's not normal, you can't identify yourself, you go mad.

Another narrative, the interviewee shared is the story about a job-seeking course in Oslo. "Those who were there told me "the best thing you can do is to get a masters". He laughed and added, "And then I thought to myself, at first I was told that I need to get a bachelor to find a job, now the stakes are higher, I shall go for masters". He concluded sarcastically "probably by the time I will be finished with my master, they will tell me to get a PhD".

5.4. RQ3. How important is a profession to educated adults with a refugee background?

Interviewee 1 responded “Yes, of course”. To the question why is it important for her to succeed professionally, she added:

Norway has given me so many facilities and opportunities, and I want to give something back. I want to be more than just a “taker” I want to give something back, be useful. I want to pay taxes. I don’t want them to think that we, refugees, are just coming here and taking. I also feel an obligation to succeed for my parents. To make them proud. They have been through a lot. They went through a lot just to give me and my sister a chance to succeed in life, to get an education. I want to give something back to them also.

To the question, how the interviewee understands “professional success” she answered:

It is important for me to succeed in my career, within my field of study. I am only the second women in my family with a higher education, my sister is a medical worker and I am an engineer, so it is very important for both of us to succeed, to be successful. We are coming from the culture where women don’t have education, or work. So, for me it is more important to be successful, than to just have a good salary.

To the question whether the inability to find a job within the profession will affect her, the interviewee replied, “Well, I will be upset. Because you study for six-seven years, and you hope to get a job. If it won’t work in Norway, then I will keep looking somewhere else”. She added “I got a lot of opportunities here, and that is why I want to do something good for the girls in my country. I want to help them. Be an example”.

Interviewee 2 shared why it is important for him to succeed:

You know, I’ve been somebody very ambitious, someone very interested in the politics...now I’m always thinking about my people in my home country. To help them, I can’t let myself to just work for money. In my home country, one of the main jobs I had was a distribution of food to people settling in the exile centers. I enjoyed it because I saw that it was helpful, i saw the results. So I think if I can be someone who can help, who can change lives, if I can find the job here which will let me to be my old self I’ll be happy.

Having any job just for money - that is not me. I always cry for my people, they should have democracy, they should have piece.

He continued:

Here I can't identify myself clearly. That's the problem. I'm not working so I have no way to go back to being my old self. I just want to be able to help people back in my country. I don't want to have a job that only profits myself. I'm not the person who seeks profit only for himself. I want my kids and my grandkids to live in peace. The way they want. I see how Norway works, and it pains me that my country is not like that. Just earning money and only carrying about myself- it's not me. I'm always saying: if I'm eating I want my neighbor's kids to eat as well. If I'm sleeping I want to know that my neighbors are able to peacefully sleep as well.

He shared "The first thing I remember is my mom carrying me and my siblings to the forest, to escape shooting". "I remember image of a naked wife of our neighbor who got shot while taking shower. How her naked body was just lying there in the mud. That haunts me. I'm thinking, why shall people be like that...?" He added

Now that I am here, I can live peacefully, I can eat. But knowing that there are people who can't afford any food at all...that hurts me. That is the thing that ruined my life. I remember when I worked at the humanitarian organization, one woman came to me with her kids. One of the bosses deprived her from the right to receive food aid, due to her background. The way those starved kids looked made me to tear up. I went to find this man and told him "You are not punishing her, you are punishing these kids". If you won't start giving her food, I will stop giving food to you, so you will understand what you are putting them through. You need to give food to children, and there, where are kids, there is the mother. Things like that has ruined my life. Sometimes I wish my parents wouldn't sent me to school, so I wouldn't be educated. Then I will just live a mediocre life, instead of fighting back. Fighting back that is what ruined my life.

The interviewee added, “And yet I am still struggling here”. He asked “Eight years, plus eight years plus fifteen. How many is that?”. “Thirty-one”. He continued, “I've been struggling for thirty-one years. Because of what I stayed for. Because I stay for democracy. It is not different from Mandela being in prison for 20 years. It's not”. The Interviewee continued, “I am not internationally recognized like Mandela, but people who lived with me know. They know i have always been fighting for people.” He concluded, “In the end, sometimes I think, it's better to be selfish. If I had been, I would not ruin my life. Sometimes I think, I will always struggle, no matter what”. “It is not easy. However, the one should not lose hope. But to struggle. If I die tomorrow, maybe that was my life, to struggle. I don't know”.

Interviewee 3 answered, “of course, it is my dream to be an IT engineer, but it is kind of difficult”. He continued, “To get a job like that, you need to have at least bachelors, and to receive that, you need to fulfill the language requirements...and then you at the competitions with Norwegians, and you don't have social network to help you find a job”. He continued, “So in a way it is much easier for those who comes here as a refugee in a childhood, because they study at the normal school, and get the same education as Norwegians, and it is easier to learn the language as a kid”. He concluded, that older is a refugee, more difficult for him or her to learn the language and find a job, regardless of the qualifications and experience.

Interviewee 4 responded, “For me professional success is everything. If I will not get a professional job, then I will not feel finished. It is everything. I think in my life is to get a job within my profession, to build a career. To get a professional job”.

The question “Why is it important for you? Is it cultural?” the interviewee replied:

I do not think it is a culture, or I think it is in every culture, that a man should get a good job. A man cannot be that welcomed if he does not have a job in every culture, so for me, I must get the job. Therefore, culture is not the biggest reason, I just want to be successful, I think I have a potential to develop myself in comparison to others, and that is why I want to be successful.

To the question “whether inability to work within the profession will upset you”, the Interviewee replied:

Yeah, when I was younger I was thinking about just getting any job I can, but after a while I understood that no, I have a knowledge, I am very good with mathematics, my mind is good, so why shall I settle? I can't do that. That is why now I keep studying instead of just working whenever. Math is very easy for me. Much easier than for others, so why should I drive a taxi with my knowledge? But if I won't find a job after this degree, then maybe I'll drive a taxi... what shall I do?

Interviewee 5 replied to the same questions:

I want a stability in life, a full-time contract and a stable salary. But, as you mentioned in describing your topic, I want a job to be meaningful. It is not even about it being related to my degree; it is that I want to be able to work up to my potential. So, I guess that is what success is to me to have a financial stability and possibility to enjoy my job.

Interviewee 6, a photographer, replied to the question "I think it is important to be successful, but it is more important to do what you love". She extended her answer:

I worked a lot and I know what I want to do, but sometimes, like in the case with freelance, it is impossible to do what you love. However, I think it is important to have a work that is meaningful to you, to feel that you are doing something that is important to you. Whether what makes you happy is to be creative or to take pictures, or working with people.

She continued, "I had some part time jobs while I was studying and this job literally gave me nothing". The Interviewee also added, "Whatever job I do, what is important is that you feel like you are doing something you can be proud of, that represents you. That will make you feel better as a person". She concluded:

Especially in the creative jobs as a photographer or as a musician, if you don't do very well as a photographer, then you don't feel that well about yourself either. You identify yourself with your job. Your job is who you are. Especially as a photographer. I have not been taking

that many pictures lately and I do not feel that well about it. I found something I want to do in my life, but I must make compromises. To be able to pay my rent.

To the question about what motivates her for professional aspirations, the interviewee replied:

I feel more for my parents, because for my parents, when they came to Norway they had nothing. And they build up a house, the “Norwegian dream”, so I feel more that I want to succeed, to get a good job for him. Because I don’t want to not succeed, because he made it possible to me. So, I don’t want to let him down. I don’t want to not work, going to NAV, I feel that would be a defeat for him. He is a person who works a lot, and we got an opportunity and we should make the best of it. And that way he also feels like I should make the best of it. So, I feel more to my parents, I would be happy to myself, to get a job. But also for my father, so that he can relax, because he can know that his job is done. I think mostly for my parents.

Interviewee 7 answered, “I don’t dream about career, what I want is a job that is safe, that pays well, and that something I’ve studied for, I want to be an engineer and I want to have a safe job”. He added, “I want to create something, I think also that’s why I studied dental technician, because it’s a meaningful job, you make something, you help people”. To the question whether a stable job will make him feel more adult, the interviewee replied, “Yeah, me and my girlfriend call it adult jobs, like when you get those jobs”.

5.5. Gratitude to Norway

Another interesting finding is that the gratitude to Norway is a motivation for professional stability for many interviews. **Interviewee 1** shared, «It’s more that Norway has given me so many facilities and opportunities, and I want to give something back. I want to be more than just a “taker”. I want to give something back, be useful. I want to pay taxes. I don’t want them to think that we, refugees, are just coming here and taking. I also feel an obligation to succeed for my parents. To make them proud. They have been through a lot. They went through a lot just to give

me and my sister a chance to succeed in life, to get an education. I want to give something back to them also”.

Interviewee 2 argued, “In this country, we just want to work here, to do something, to pay taxes, to help the country to develop. Because one day, when there is peace in our countries we will just go back, without giving anything back to Norway”. **Interviewee 3** said, “I don’t think about social benefits, I want to work, pay taxes and be financially stable. I am grateful to Norway for the safe life here”.

5.6. Cultural identity

Identity is how an individual defines himself, and how he thinks people define him (Erikson, 1950). This subchapter presents answers to the question “How do you identify yourself?”

Interviewee 1 shared “I am a half. The best from both countries. What I like the most. I am, who I am. It important for to me to succeed in life and work, but I also want to get married, have a family of my own. But I don’t want to be a housewife, like women in my country. But family is an important part of my life, I am doing everything for them”. **Interviewee 4** replied, “Probably something in between, I have a big respect to a Norwegian culture, it is very nice, they respect people and I like that, and as well my country and religion are important for me”. To the question whether professional success will make him feel more integrated to Norway, he replied, I feel integrated enough, but of course being professionally successful will make me feel even better”. To the question whether cultural background affects his choice of friends, he replied, “No, it doesn’t matter to me”.

Interviewee 5 replied, “50/50. I almost grew up here, and I have mostly only Norwegian friends, so I feel very integrated. However, I still respect and love my other culture. Like, I listen to the traditional music at home, cook traditional food and so on”. To the question whether professional success will make her feel more integrated, she replied, “No, as I said, I feel very much Norwegian. So no, I don’t look at the job as a way of integration to Norwegian society”. She added “I have never felt discriminated or humiliated here, at least not that I remember of and I feel more than welcomed here. But, on the other hand, if the job will force me to go to another country, I am open to it. I can move, like to Sweden or Denmark, for instance”.

Interviewee 6 replied:

When I was younger, we visited my home-country almost every year, as a holiday, but now I haven't been there since I was 16, and since now I forgot the language, it's more difficult for me. People think I'm lying when I say I don't speak my native language, and say "of course you speak it, because you are from here". But I feel more Norwegian, and don't think that much about it on daily basis.

On the question "If you meet someone new outside of Norway, how would you introduce yourself, Interviewee 6 replied, "I think I would say I was from Norway. If we were talking deeper, I would say that originally I was from ***. But, I don't identify myself as a ***". **Interviewee 7** replied "I would identify myself as Norwegian. The only family I have left in my home country is my grandfather from my mother's side, other than that I don't know anyone. So... I have more family in Norway than in there". To the question "Are you familiar with your native culture very well?", the interviewee replied "Not very well, but I know about the culture, and I've been there many times, actually my sister is more integrated than me, she has more connections than me, even though she's born here, and I'm born there".

5.7. Gender

Interviewee 5 shared that she faced gender-based prejudices, rather ethnical:

In some newspapers, I worked, that are very old-fashioned and always with a man in charge it is more difficult to be a woman. When I used to work as a press photographer, where the most of other photographers and bosses are men, I often faced the assumptions that I am tiny and weak and cannot do something. Often they would ask me: "are you sure you can do that"? And, why shouldn't I be able to do something? Especially in one of the newspapers, where one of my bosses was that typical Norwegian man: "women can't do this, or that". I remember, once, there was a demonstration, and I didn't get to cover it, and then my boss told me: "Oh, I could have send you there, to make the photos of the demonstration from the building". And I said, that I would have managed to take photos if I was in the crowd as well. He didn't even think of me, being able to cover it because I am a woman, and it could have been dangerous for me.

Interviewee 6 shared that his sister faces difficulties with finding jobs and said, “People don’t look the same way towards woman as they do to men. I don’t know why. But I don’t know, I don’t think it’s a refugee problem, I think its general, quite everyone, if you are Norwegian, or come Sweden, or anywhere, you’ll have the same problem. Maybe the color of your skin will have something to do with it, but that’s different... that’s something else”.

5.8. Family and marriage

Majority of Interviewees, regardless of gender and nationality want to have a family. However, for many career is a higher priority.

Interviewee 1 shared “It important for to me to succeed in life and work, but I also want to get married, have a family of my own. However, I don’t want to be a housewife, like women in my country. But family is an important part of my life, I am doing everything for them”. She also shared “I would like to marry a man from the same cultural background. I would feel more comfortable”. However, she stressed “career and finding a job are my main priority right now”.

Interviewee 4 replied “It is important, but I don’t think about it now, I only concentrate on my career right now, cause if I’ll focus on both it will lead to nowhere. I want both, but I must find a job first and then I’ll think about the family”.

Interviewee 5 is the only Interviewee for whom it is more important to have family and children. She shared “Yes, I want to be married, to have kids. Especially, that two of my other sisters are married already. Plus, my mom is always asking me about it”. She added, “But yes, I wouldn’t mind to be a “trophy wife”, to be a housewife. Family is important to me, more important than being a successful professional”. She continued, “I think I would be more comfortable building a family with someone from the same cultural background as me”. **Interviewee 6** answered, “Yeah, in the future, but it’s not the most important thing. One time in my future, I would want to have children, but it’s not something like I’m planning. For me my career is more important right now, and after that will see”.

Interviewee 7 responded, “Traditional eastern European with a lot of kids, and a big family...that’s not for me. Because I’ve grown up with it, and I don’t fit in there, I think I’m more integrated that I don’t want that. Because I’m tired of that, and it’s too much for me. Personally, but my girlfriend, who is Norwegian, she likes that. So, we kind of switched roles”. “And no, my family does not care about me getting married and they don’t push my sister either, she can do

whatever she feels like doing. I mean, they correct her if she does something wrong, me as well, but they don't tell her how to live her life".

6. Discussion

Ability to work within the professional field and have a meaningful career was important for all interviewees. However, none of seven interviewees had a full-time job within their field of study. Only Interviewee 2, thinks that his refugee background possibly affects his employment status. Remaining respondents name different reasons such as regulations of the Introduction Program, oil crisis, specifics of the profession, and wrong choice of the profession.

The experiences with the labor market of respondents vary. However, the interviewees who came to Norway as adults (Interviewees 2 and 3) have a more negative perception of the experiences in Norway, than those who came to Norway in childhood and adolescence. The oldest respondent, Interviewee 2, who is now 52 and came to Norway 15 years ago, has the most negative narratives, following with Interviewee 3, who came to Norway at the age of 24 and lives in Norway the shortest. Interviewee 3 shared his narratives about the Introduction Program and NAV, which he finds challenging. At the same time, Interviewee 7, who came to Norway at the age of two and is 24 now, following with Interviewee 6, who came to Norway at the age of three have the most positive narratives.

Career is important for the majority respondents, but each interviewee puts a different meaning into the definitions. For interviewees 1, 4 and 6 it means working within the field of the education and actualization of the potential and professional interests through work. For Interviewee 2 career is meaningful, useful for the society and people work. For Interviewee 3, an ideal career is a full-time position within the field of his study (IT). For Interviewees 5 and 7 career equals a full-time employment. Inability to work within the professions upsetting for all interviewees, except Interviewee 5 and 7.

6. 1. Employment status and challenges

Following subchapters present a brief discussion of the main findings in accordance to the research questions and sub-questions. The first findings answer whether respondents work within the profession, and whether their unemployment is related to discrimination and prejudices. While none of the interviewees works within the field of education, they name different reasons as an explanation for unemployment. **Interviewee 1** and **4** relate difficulties with finding a job to the oil crisis and reduction of workplaces in the field of engineering. None of two relates it to prejudices or discrimination towards them, nor did either of them faced discrimination while applying for jobs. **Interviewee 6** highlighted that it is common to work by contract and not full-time within her

professional field (photography). Therefore, she does not think that her employment status is affected by her refugee background. **Interviewee 7** never worked within his first occupation, as he was unhappy with a choice of the field of study. Currently, he studies in a different program. **Interviewee 5** does not know the potential reasons but does not think that her background affects her career opportunities. Only **Interviewee 2** admits that often he feels that his inability to find a job is related to prejudices and discrimination and considers his ethnical background and looks to be a reason for prejudices from the employers. **Interviewee 3** shared that regulations of IMDi and NOKUT made it problematic for him to continue the university education. As he supports his family in a third country, he currently has five part-time jobs. Some of the jobs he found by himself, other through NAV. He does not think that refugees are discriminated in Norway. However, he feels that refugees are only considered as an unskilled labor, regardless of one's education or experience, and that NAV and IMDi are interested in engaging refugees to the labor market more than in helping them to receive/continue higher education.

Challenges

Poor knowledge of the Norwegian language is the main reason for immigrants and refugees to stay outside the labor market, according to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (Meld. St.30, 2015-2016). The majority of the interviewees define learning Norwegian as one of the biggest challenges. The exception being the interviewees who came to Norway in early childhood (**Interviewees 6 and 7**) and consider Norwegian as a native language. However, as the majority of interviews live in Norway for more than 10 years and Norwegian was there study language at school and university, and speak Norwegian well, except for Interviewee 3.

Interviewee 3 lives in Norway for the shortest period (nearly 3 years). His experiences differ from other respondents, as he is the only interviewee who recently participated in the Introduction Program and is in contact with NAV. After he received the residence permit, the interviewee did not move to an assigned municipality, as he was promised a job in Oslo and lost a right to participate in the Introduction Program. The interviewee contacted IMDi in order to restore his right to participation and experienced that *the regulations of IMDi are not clear*. According to Interviewee 3, each IMDi employee gave him a different answer. Along with that the interviewee argued that, *the number of Norwegian languages classes within the program are not enough to learn the language fluently*. At the same time, the interviewee was told by IMDi, that he may not

eligible to participate in the courses, as by the time of the argument he was able to communicate in Norwegian. However, in his opinion, while he speaks Norwegian, his knowledge of the language is far from the level required for higher education.

Another challenge named by the majority of respondents is *the need in connections* to find a job in Norway. Interviewees 1, 3, 4 and 6 share the opinion it is important to know someone who can help you with employment. All of them, including Interviewee 3, received first jobs in Norway through the connections. Interviewee 1 received her jobs with the help of her sister. Interviewee 3 received his first job in Norway with the help of his cousin, as did Interviewee 4. Interviewee 6 highlights that it is even a bigger challenge for new refugees, for they do not have a lot of connections or friends in Norway.

Integration

According to the report, agenda of the Introduction Program is to avoid social and financial gap among Norwegian residents. The argument of the Ministry is that families of immigrants and refugees, where adults are dependent on the social support and do not work, are in a difficult position both financially and socially. These challenges may lead to lower participation in social life and formation of large groups that feel excluded from the Norwegian society. To assure that all residents of Norway feel as equal members of the society is an important task, where enrollment into the labor market and financial independence is the first step (Ministry of Justice and Public Security, NOU 2017:2, 2017).

The majority of the respondents feel "very integrated" into the Norwegian society. It is especially the case for the Interviewees 1, 4-7, who grew up here. Interviewees 6 and 7 have "Norwegian identities" as they referred to it, meaning that they do not associate themselves with the motherlands of the parents. Interviewees 1, 4 and 5 define their cultural identities as "a half", meaning that their cultural identities are influenced by both Norway and a native country. The finding can be discussed through Erikson's (1950) theory, where Interviewees 6 and 7, who came to Norway in infancy, have been influenced by the Norwegian social surrounding, culture, and language. They, therefore, lack a sense of connection to the countries where they were born. At the same time, the interviewees who came here in adolescence (1, 4 and 5) were old enough to remember the life before Norway, and yet young enough to be strongly influenced by the Norwegian culture, school, and teachers, classmates, etc.

Interviewees 2 and 3 did not share narratives about the sense of belonging to the society. However, based on the responses of Interviewee 2, it can be argued that the interviewee has a strong connection with his homeland, as his identity formation was influenced by his motherland and not Norway. It, however, does not mean that he feels unintegrated in Norway, but rather shows Erikson's (1954) statement that adult refugees tend to idealize and be nostalgic about the past. As current thesis is not a psychological research, the discussion does not evaluate mental condition of the interviewees. However, with a reference to Erikson's "uprootedness", it can be argued that inability to be at home (in the past) or to have similar life (in terms of profession and the position in the society), saddens Interviewee 2. The interviewee addresses that without a freedom to go home, one cannot identify yourself "you live, but you are not yourself", which can be connected to what Erikson (1950) described as "uprootedness", loss of sameness and continuity of self.

As for interviewee 3, who has not shared thoughts about his integration to Norway, he was able to find several jobs without the help of NAV in a rather short period of time. While his main agenda is to have an income to support the rest of his family, he seems to not reflect about his life in Norway as much. Along with that, he shared that life in Norway is much better for him and other people from his country, who escaped dictatorship and war.

6.2. Prejudices towards refugees in Norway

The second group of findings is whether interviewees ever felt dignified and whether they believe to have equal employment opportunities with non-refugees. Dignity is subjective. While a subject of a philosophical debate, it is argued to be a basis of human rights, law and morality (Kaufman, Kuch, Neuhäuser and Webster, 2011). However, how one understands dignity and the sensitivity to the external factors varies from an individual to individual. When talking about indignifying or humiliating experiences, one normally means that individual's self-respect and ego were diminished, or when one's worth as a human was not recognized (Kaufman, Kuch, Neuhäuser and Webster, 2011). Norway as a human rights supporter constitutionally provides equality and human rights for all. However, even in the absence of legal direct violations of human rights, one can find himself in a situation dignifying to him, from the point of his moral standards.

The respondents who came to Norway in the childhood (Interviewees 1, 4 -7) or adolescence do not think that their backgrounds affect their employment situation, unlike the respondents who came to Norway as adults (Interviewees 2 and 3). Interviewee 3 avoided using the word "discrimination" but shared his thoughts on flaws in the Introduction Program and NAV

rules and regulations. He described his life in reception center, where he observed that asylum seekers are not trusted by workers, and there is a problem of communication between asylum seekers and workers in the camp. He also observed that coming from a dictatorship, asylum seekers and refugees are often afraid to complain and believe that complaining may lead to the loss of residence permit in Norway. Interviewee 3 talked about the difficulties of understanding the regulations of IMDi, as the regulations are not clear. He shared that it seems for him, that the regulations are written unclearly intentionally, so one complaint would not create the precedent. As for NAV, the main agenda for the counselors is to assist refugees with finding a job. However, he shared that refugees are only offered unskilled jobs, such as a salesperson at the grocery store or cleaning personnel at the restaurants, regardless of one's professional background or education. Interviewee 3 shared that at times it seems to him that NAV intentionally keeps refugees on the level of unskilled labor. While

He stated that argument of NAV is that refugees should learn the Norwegian labor culture and the language before entering skilled labor, where work at the restaurants or grocery stores considered to be a good language practice. However, from his experience, such jobs require minimum language interaction and therefore are not helpful for the language learning purposes. Narratives of Interviewee 2 support the last statement. The respondent shared the experience of working in the bakery, where the majority of other employees were immigrants as himself. As none of them knew Norwegian well, he and his colleagues were interacting in English, and not Norwegian. He, therefore, argues that while knowledge of Norwegian is a requirement for receiving a job in Norway, refugees do not get a chance for improving the knowledge while working unskilled, physical jobs.

Along with that, Interviewee 2 shared being recommended to change his traditional Middle Eastern name to a more neutral "Norwegian" name by the counselor from NAV. And while the advice was aimed to increase employment opportunities of the respondent, it may indicate a presence of prejudices towards people with non-Norwegian names among employers. To continue the subject of prejudices towards people with non-Norwegian names, Interviewee 6 shared to always submit her job applications in person, due to the fact that employer might assume that she does not speak Norwegian very well, even though she grew up in Norway. Narratives of the Interviewee 2 are more negative. He admitted that every so often he feels that his racial belonging and looks affect people's perception of him. The respondent lives in Norway for 15 years and has a bachelor's

degree in Economics. However, he never worked within the field of the study. He shared to try to find a job by sending applications online, going to the offices in person and participating in job fairs. However, he never gets a positive reply. He shared to be convinced that his looks and racial belonging lead to prejudices towards his knowledge of languages and professional skills. While English is his native language and he speaks Norwegian fluently after 15 years in the country, he never receives an offer. The respondent told a story of applying for a truck-driving job in the store. The attitude of the female employer made him feel unwelcomed. He shared it to be obvious that the employer was uncomfortable talking to him. Although he avoided using terms discrimination or racism, he described the experience as hurtful. After the job interview, the respondent felt dignified. “Even the simplest jobs we cannot get,” he told and stated it is more difficult to find a job for someone “with our looks” referring to the people from the African continent. Along with that, Interviewee 2 argued that it is more difficult for refugees than immigrants are, as refugees do not have a luxury of going back home. A person who comes to Norway as a student or a labor immigrant can return home in case of failure to find a job. A refugee cannot. He, therefore, shared to feel powerless and trapped. Generally, narratives of Interviewee 2 have a strong connection with Erikson’s “uprootedness” and a description of stagnation.

6.3. Identity, self-esteem and the importance of profession and meaningful job in life

The third group of findings is the importance of a career in life and how the inability to find a job within the profession affect lives of highly educated individuals with a refugee background. To work within the profession is important for the majority of Interviewees (Except Interviewees 5 and 7). While each interviewee has different professional goals, all of them consider stable work and income as a crucially important part of adult life. Hence, the assumption that career and stable job are an essential part of the adulthood stages of life is truthful within the findings. Younger respondents have different motivations than the older respondent. Interviewees 1, 4-7, only recently graduated from the University. To them receiving a full-time job is a first step to the adult life. For Interviewee 3 a full-time job means an ability to support the family and settling in Norway. For Interviewee 2 receiving a full-time job means achieving a sense of stability in life and reconnecting with his old self.

6.3.1. Erik Erikson’s Theory of Life Cycles

The Theory of Life Cycles by Erik H. Erikson allows us to place the respondents in two categories: those who came to Norway in childhood and those who came to Norway as an adult.

The experiences of these groups are dramatically different, which may illustrate Erikson's assumption that while identity develops throughout the life span, it is strongly influenced by the social and cultural surrounding. The first group of interviewees (1, 4-7) came to Norway in childhood and adolescence. Some of them do not have memories of the life outside Norway, some value the native culture and traditions, but see Norway as home. This finding reflects Erikson's (1954) Adolescence (V), a stage when a person starts to form his/her identity, by performing different social roles (a son, a granddaughter, a student, a friend). For respondents 1, 4-7 this stage happened in Norway while studying at Norwegian school, being friends with Norwegian classmates. Some of the respondents seek to a traditional life-style within the family; however, their identity formation was influenced by the Norwegian culture and social structure more, than by the native culture. **Interviewees 6 and 7** identify themselves as Norwegians while **Interviewees 1, 4 and 5** identify themselves with both Norwegian and native cultures or define himself or herself as "a half".

To the interviewees who came to Norway in childhood, resettlement was easier, than for their parents. They did not experience the loss of a stable job, social status or native lifestyle; nor did they have a direct contact with the migration service and other authorities. While some of them shared to have negative experiences at school, all of them seem to have a great sense of belongingness to Norway and the Norwegian society. That provides an explanation to the finding that this group of interviewees have a more positive narratives and higher career expectations, than the second group of interviewees.

For Interviewees 1, 4-7, ability to work within the education or to be professionally successful is not a part of adjustment to the Norwegian society, but rather a need to self-actualize and to be respected; the needs suggested by Abraham Maslow in the Motivation and Personality (1954). At the same time, these interviewees do not seem to experience uprootedness as, to repeat, they have a stronger connection to Norway, than to the home countries of their parents. Their narratives support the assumption that for young adults recently graduated from college, full-time employment means the beginning of adult life; hence, they experience crisis of waithood (stage VI), and not crisis of generosity vs. stagnation (stage VII). They followed the Norwegian social structure: first school, then university, the following step is a full-time job, which will lead to the beginning of adult life. It is what Levinson (1986), who elaborated on Erikson's theory, described as "climbing a ladder of social institutions".

Contrary to the first group, the second group of interviewees has experiences that are more negative. Both Interviewees 2 and 3 spoke of feeling “helpless” and “lost”, which is common among people experiencing uprootedness (Erikson, 1954). Interviewee 3 struggles with working five jobs to earn enough money to support his family in the third country. As conflict in his country occurred unexpectedly, he lost stable life his education was disrupted and he is separated from his family. He may experience uprootedness, but his preoccupation with earning money seems to overshadow other worries of current life. During the interview, he seemed highly stressed and tired by working at five jobs. However, he showed to be rather friendly and positive, that allows us to argue that he has not developed a sense of stagnation, as according to Erikson’s theory, people who experience crisis of generativity tend to be bitter, and at times, aggressive.

The narratives of Interviewee 2 relate to Erikson’s theory more than reflections of other interviewees. Interviewee 2 came to Norway at the age of 36, as an adult during the seventh stage of a life cycle. His identity development happened in his home country, where he grew up, received an education, married and got children, and had a full-time position. At the same time, he was a rebel, and from the narratives, we can see that his rebellious past is the core of his identity. It is reflection of his sense of generativity and a need in self-actualization. It is his desire to be helpful for people in his country and elsewhere. It is his answer to the question “who am I”.

Before seeking refuge in Norway, Interviewee 2 had a meaningful well-paid job and a valuable social status “I was someone very respected”. The decision to leave home was tremendously difficult, as he gave up not only familiar life, job and family, but his very identity as a justice-fighter. He defines his life a “a struggle” and compares his life in exile to Nelson Mandela’s imprisonment “I have been struggling for 31 years...it is not that different from Mandela being in prison for 20 years...I am not internationally recognized as him, but people who lived with me know...”. Inability to have a similar social status and position in Norway burdens him, as he shares to feel trapped and not knowing how to identify himself. His statement “Many people do not know that, but when this freedom is taken away from you, you are not a human being. You are not. You live, but you are not yourself. And that's not normal, you can't identify yourself, you go mad” reflects Erikson’s definition of uprootedness as loss of continuity and sameness of identity. A lot like Jewish refugees of the Second World War, Interviewee 2 cannot relate neither to his past life, nor to his new role as a refugee in Norway. His inability to be as successful as he was before moving to Norway causes a crisis of generativity and integrity. Erikson

defined the last stage of a life cycle as a period of evaluation of life and decisions. Interviewee seems to reflect and think about his life a lot. He shares to regret his political activity, claiming it ruined his life. At the same time, he is proud of his past, and wishes to be able to go home one day. Hence, he is yet to resolve the crisis of integrity vs. despair, where finding a full-time job within the field of education, may help him to successfully overcome it.

6.3.2. Abraham Maslow's Motivation and Personality

The Theory of Motivation (1954) by Abraham Maslow helps us to understand the importance of the career in life of interviewees. Although, both in Maslow's and Erikson's theory career is an essential part of a life structure, Maslow addresses the importance of profession and self-actualization broader fashion than Erikson. If Erikson argues about employment as a basis of stability in adult life "senior position in adult world", Maslow argues that it is crucial for a person to fulfill his/hers professional aspirations "to be ultimately at peace with oneself". The findings support Maslow's Theory of Motivations and Hierarchy of Needs. Professional realization is important for all interviewees in extent. However, to some, it is crucially important to succeed and work within the profession. For instance, Interviewee 4 says, "to me it is everything... I have a talent in math; it is much easier for me, than for most people, so why should I settle to be, for instance, a taxi driver?" Interviewee 6, who has the most creative profession among interviewees, a photographer, argues that photography is her way of actualizing her potential "it is how I show myself to the world. If I don't take pictures for a long time, I am getting upset... I tried to work just at the random job, but I gained nothing from it, I felt empty". Interviewee 1 said "It is important for me, I studied really hard for seven years, and I want to be professionally successful... It is also important, so my parents would see me succeeding". For Interviewee 2 it is important to be helpful and useful for the society, profession for him is a way of actualizing his sense of generosity "Working just for money is not me... I cannot eat, if I know that my neighbor's children are hungry..." For Interviewee 3 it is important to receive a full-time position within the field of IT, so he can feel more settled in Norway.

It is interesting, that though Interviewees who grew up in Norway and those who came to Norway as adults have different experiences and sense of belongingness to Norwegian society, career is important to most of the respondents. None of the respondents wishes to settle to a physical/unskilled labor, such as work at restaurant and grocery stores. All respondents wish to

have a financial stability and recognized social status. All interviewees, in different ways wish to be successful. For instance, Interviewee 5, who prioritizes family and marriage over professional realization, wishes to have a full-time and meaningful job; or being stably married with a possibility to be a homemaker. On the other hand, Interviewee 7, shares that he can settle for any a stable job, not necessarily relevant to the education, if a job is interesting and meaningful. It may support Maslow's argument that the need to be respected is common in all cultures and societies; and that all people in the society have a need to be self-respected, recognized and important. Hence, the esteem-needs are important for the respondents.

While it is not important for all interviewees to work within their education or training, it is important for all of them to have a skilled, socially recognized, respected job. Inability to find such job may affect lives of the interviewees in different ways, which the limitations of the findings do not allow us to discuss in a great depth. However, it is possible to conclude that a need to settle for an unskilled position, just for income, will be upsetting for all interviewees. Another extent upon which Maslow's theory is relevant to our findings is the author's view on importance of motivation and recognition of one's potential. Maslow (1954) argued that motivation is significant part of personality development. When it comes to esteem-needs or actualization-needs, every individual finds different motivations. Some interviewees find motivation for a professional success in family, it is important for them to succeed in life as a gratitude to the sacrifices their parents went through, to refuge in Norway. Others name gratitude to Norway and a will to be useful for the Norwegian society as motivation.

Interviewee 3 addressed the lack of motivation from the Norwegian government and NAV in his narratives about work of IMDi and NAV. In the narratives, the interviewee shared that at times it seems to him that NAV intentionally keeps refugees on the level of unskilled labor. While the respondent mentioned having respect and gratitude to Norway, he stressed, "The lack of motivation from NAV officers leads for a number of refugees to stay at home and receive the financial support". In the lack of motivation and career opportunities, many refugees prefer to not work and receive the state support, rather than work at the meaningless physical job, for nearly the same amount of money. The interviewee shared that when he talks about going back to the University or looking for a job within his field of his interest (IT), he receives a demotivating reply from the case officer. He gave examples of replies such as "you cannot get a job like that", or "you should not be picky and settle for any offer", or "the first job is never perfect". While the

respondent shared to understand the logic behind this advice, it upsets him. This narrative may not be a vivid example of discrimination towards refugees, but it addresses the subject of motivation and recognition of the potential of newly arrived refugees. Along with that, the interviewee shared the advice he received from the NAV councilor, to change his traditional Middle Eastern name to a more neutral Norwegian. The interviewee argued that while he understood the logic behind the advice, it made him feel realize that there are prejudices towards refugees among the employers.

6.4. NAV's view on the issue

This subchapter presents interview of a local NAV leader in Akerhus. This interview is not presented previously in the findings because it was not conducted to prove or disprove the narratives of other interviewees, rather it presents NAV's view on the issue raised in this thesis. The interview was not recorded and was in a form of a discussion of the problems raised in the thesis, what are the experiences of NAV, what is the role of NAV in the Introduction Program and employment of refugees, NAV's overall positioning on the subject of importance of career in life. However, the leader of NAV highlighted that rules and regulation regarding the issue vary from municipality to municipality. Hence, the interview present experiences of the local office, and not all NAV offices in the country overall. NAV along with UDI are central to the discussion of refugees and labor in Norway. However, I was not able to interview employees of UDI due to time limitations to conduct the thesis, as UDI has a longer response times and stricter regulations to get an interview.

Here and below, the head of a local NAV office is referred to as "*I*". Firstly, According to *I*, there are very few newly arrived refugees with a higher education in Norway. The interviewee did not provide exact numbers but highlighted that "it is very rare. Majority of refugees do not have even elementary education". For those few with higher education knowledge of the Norwegian language is the main challenge, along with the acceptance of a foreign degree. According to *I*, the language requirement for the higher positions is level B2 for reading, speaking, and writing, "Which is very high". Along with that, he stressed that there are prejudices towards the quality of university education from the certain countries:

From my experience, NOKUTS approval is not even important. If a person has a degree from a University of Aleppo, it is likely an employer will not consider you, even if the

degree is verified by NOKUT. The Norwegian education is always preferred by the employers. However, refugees who have other European degrees are likely to find a job within the profession.

Along with that *I* shared to be confident that there are prejudices toward refugees, but highlighted that it is highly difficult to prove it. However, he stressed that there always are people who think that they are discriminated, even if it not the case. "For some people it is a way of excusing the lack of skills or training and blame unemployment on discrimination". He agreed that it is more difficult for people who came to Norway as adults, to integrate and find a job in Norway, "However, I am not worried for the kids of immigrants/refugees, who received education here. They are likely to find a job". Along with that, *I* explained that the organization of the Introduction Program and NAV's role in it differs from the municipality to the municipality, "We receive instructions from the government, such as that 70 percent of refugees should be studying or working. However, we never meet this goal. It is only 40-45 percent of refugees who succeed".

The reasons are...well, many people clearly lie about their education levels and often seem to have fake documents about the education. As, for instance, a person has a bachelor's degree in economics, but seem not to know basic math. In addition, often, we expect people with a higher education to progress in introduction program faster, than non-refugees, but after a while, it becomes clear that they have lied about the education, because they progress as slow, as those who cannot read or write.

As a comment to the role of motivation in work of NAV, *I* replied:

As for motivation...we have to take into consideration the background and skills of refugees. However, there is always a dilemma, of whether a person should settle for any job. The general rule is, if a person cannot find a job relevant to the skills within the year, we suggest them to take any job. Most of the people agree, but sometimes they reject a job offer.

He added:

As for women, it is harder. Often they are not used to work and it is uncommon for them to not stay at home. It is also difficult to know if they are not allowed to work by the husband, because they always say “I want to work” to us, because they think it is what we want to hear.

According to *I.*, the main motivation for people to seek asylum in Norway is "so their kids would have a better future, better education, and work". To the question about the importance of a career in the life of highly educated adult refugees, *I.* replied,

Sometimes, we work with man who had a highly appreciated work in the home country, had a high social status. And here they have to start from the beginning. That, of course, negatively affects their mental health, life, and families. We try to provide psychological help (it depends from commune to commune), but it is challenging.

I. concluded that "The main difficulty is that we do not have time and capacity to follow each individual after they are done with the introduction class. So we cannot help them to succeed. So time, capacity and lack of NAV employers are the biggest challenges". Along with that *I.* clarified that a person who refuses to move to an assigned municipality inevitably loses a right to participate in the Introduction Program, and a right to receive financial support. Hence, according to him, the regulation is rather clear regarding the matter. According to *I.* “but not that many refuse to move, as the stakes are very high”. He added that government implements the policy, where refugees cannot choose a place of new residence, to assure diversity and to avoid “creation of ghettos, as, in other Scandinavian countries, there are certain districts and even cities where the majority of the population are immigrants and refugees”. To remind, avoid a creation of parallel society excluded from the Norwegian society, is one of the main goals of the immigration policies of the Norwegian government.

As it was mentioned in the Introduction, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security considers the Introduction Program highly successful, with nearly 70 percent of participants at work or education within a year. However, the head of a local NAV office shared, that within the municipality the numbers of people at work or education after the program are between 45-50 percent. However, his notion that individuals with a refugee background who grew up in Norway,

or children of immigrant/refugee parents are likely to find a job and have equal opportunities with non-refugee population supports the finding of the thesis, where a group of interviewees who came to Norway in childhood has more positive experiences and career expectations than those, who came to Norway as an adult.

While the findings do not provide evidence that there are more prejudices towards refugees who came to Norway in adulthood, those interviewees have more negative experiences and lower expectations. Hence, it can be concluded, that integration process and coping with resettlement is easier for those who grew up here. Or simpler, individuals with a refugee background, who grew up in Norway believe that they have equal employment opportunities and are not a subject of prejudices in Norway, while those who came to Norway as an adult feel the opposite way.

At the same time, the head of NAV office shared the opinion that there indeed prejudices among the employers towards immigrants and refugees, as towards quality of education from certain countries. The main reason for unemployment, according to the government is poor knowledge of the Norwegian language and low quality of education and skills. However, while it explains unemployment for new refugees with no education, disrupted education or education from the countries with an untrustworthy educational system (Interviewee 2 in the thesis). It does not explain an inability to find a job for those who came to Norway in adulthood, but lives here for a long period of time and has a degree from Norwegian university (for instance, Interviewee 3).

6.5. Summary of the discussion

To conclude, none of the interviewees has a job within the study field. However, 4 of the Interviewees only recently graduated from the Universities, which may explain current unemployment. At the same time, an assumption that unemployment of the interviewees is related to a discrimination or prejudices towards refugees is not supported by findings. Oppositely, 5 Interviewees out of 7 do not recall facing any discrimination while looking for a job. Along with that 5 Interviewees out of 7 believe to have equal employment opportunities with non-refugee residents of Norway. Only 1 Interviewee out of 7 considers that his racial belonging and nationality reflect employers will to hire him.

The main finding of the research is that individuals who came to Norway during childhood and adolescence have more positive narratives than those who came to Norway as an adult. Interviewee 2, the oldest of the interviewees, have the biggest difficulties coping with

unemployment, along with Interviewee 3, who came to Norway shortest period ago. At the same time, the findings support the assumption that without a stable, full-time job, newly graduated young adults, do not feel “complete” or mature. The findings support the assumption that career is an important part of the sense of stability in one's life. To have a full-time job and a stable income is important to all Interviewees. Only one Interviewee out of seven prioritizes family and children over career.

If to assume that the group of interviewees who came to Norway in childhood (Interviewees 1,4-7) will find a job in the nearest future, and Interviewee 3 will find a job after achieving fluency in Norwegian and English, and graduating from the university, the reasons why Interviewee 2, who lives in Norway for fifteen years, speaks Norwegian and English and has a bachelors degree from the Norwegian university, along with professional experience from NGO, is unable to find a full-time job in relevance with his education are unclear. Hence, the reasons for unemployment among residents with a refugee background in Norway may be beyond the poor knowledge of the language, lack of education or training, or not understanding the Norwegian labor culture. However, the thesis has limitations to conclude this statement, as only one interviewee out of seven (Interviewee 2) has such background.

At the same time, career success is important for the majority of interviewees. By career success, the interviewees understand working within the profession, and for a job to be meaningful. Being professionally successful does not equal being more integrated to Norway for the interviewees who came to Norway in the childhood, but it means to be more accepted to the society and have stable lives, for interviewees who came here in adulthood. Inability to be work within the profession will be upsetting for the majority of respondents, but even more so for Interviewee 2, who used to be professionally accomplished in his home country. The rejections from even unskilled physical jobs make him feel vulnerable. Hence, inability to work within the profession does negatively affect lives of adult highly educated individuals with a refugee background. Thus, along with general employment, the subject of refugee access professional labor market should be discussed more widely.

The thesis concludes that experiences of highly educated individuals with a refugee background vary based on the age of arrival to Norway, nationality and the length of residence. Current research cannot conclude the reasons for unemployment among highly educated refugees in Norway but rather indicates the issues for a broader examination. Narratives of refugees, both

who grew up in Norway and who participates in the Introduction Program can help to understand and improve both migration and integration policies, along with helping to achieve goals of the government. While current research has limitations due to the number and backgrounds of the participants, it gives a background for the future research of the subject.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current research were to explore attitudes towards people with a refugee background in Norway in the labor market and the obstacles for this group to gain employment. In their perception, why can individuals with a refugee background not find a job within the profession, how important is a profession to them and how inability to work within the profession affects their lives? The research introduced Norwegian legislation about refugees in Norway; conceptual and theoretical framework with a focus on works of Erik H. Erikson and Abraham Maslow and a brief literature review of researches by other authors; findings, based on seven semi-structured interviews and discussion of findings.

The findings and the discussion are structured in the relation to the research question and sub-questions. Through the findings, we find out that none of interviewees work within the profession. However, the reason for unemployment vary. The main finding of the research is that experiences of those refugees, who came to Norway as adult, are significantly more negative, than experiences of those, who came to Norway in childhood. Only one interviewee believes that his inability to find a job is related to discrimination, however, another interviewee believes that intention of the Norwegian government is to keep refugees as an unskilled labor. Professional realization is important for the majority of interviewees. Profession is a big part of identity and lives of majority of interviewees. Most of respondents have high professional ambitions. Five interviewees claim to be saddened if unable to work within the profession. However, unemployment burdens the oldest interviewee the most. Interviewees name different motivations for career aspirations, but mostly agree on importance of self-actualization. Meaningful and stable employment is important for majority of the respondents, but for refugees who came to Norway as adult, being able to realize professionally, means to be more included to Norway.

The research concludes that it is important to assure that highly educated refugees in Norway have access to the professional labor market. While there is lack of research on the subject, narratives and experiences of highly educated refugees in Norway help to indicate existing issues, and create a foundation for a future research. Refugees, as highly vulnerable group of the society, require more attention to the subjects of motivation and self-esteem, where profession is a big part of both.

References

Act on an introductory programme and Norwegian language instruction for newly arrived immigrants [Introduction Act] (2005). Retrieved from <http://app.uio.no/ub/ujur/oversatte-lover/cgi-bin/sok.cgi?type=LOV>

Allan, B. A., Dexter, C., Kinsey, R., & Parker, S. (2016). Meaningful work and mental health: job satisfaction as a moderator. *Journal of Mental Health*, 1-7.

Assembly, U. G. (1948). Universal declaration of human rights. *UN General Assembly*.

Beitz, C. R. (2013). Human dignity in the theory of human rights: Nothing but a phrase?. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 41(3), 259-290.

Bouzenita, A. I., & Boulanouar, A. W. (2016). Maslow's hierarchy of needs: An Islamic critique. *Intellectual Discourse*, 24(1), 59.

Bjugstad, H.K. & Rustad Holseter, A.M. (2017). *Education from Back Home*. Retrieved from <https://www.ssb.no/en/utdanning/artikler-og-publikasjoner/education-from-back-home>

Bryman, A. (2015). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.

Cooper B. (2005) *Norway: Migrant Quality, Not Quantity*. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/norway-migrant-quality-not-quantity>

Eastmond, M. (2007). Stories as lived experience: Narratives in forced migration research. *Journal of refugee studies*, 20(2), 248-264.

Elkind, D. (1970). Erik Erikson's eight ages of man. *New York Times magazine*, April, 81-86.

Erikson, E. H. (1950). Child and society. 2nd éd, 53-54.

Erikson, E. H. (1959). Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers. *Psychological issues*, 1(1).

Erikson, E. H. (1982). *The life cycle completed: A review*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Erikson, E. H. (1993). *Childhood and society*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Erikson, E.H. (1964). *Insight and responsibility*. New York: WW Norton & Company, Inc.

Erikson, E.H. (1980). *Identity and the life cycle*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Ertorer, S. E. (2014). Managing identity in the face of resettlement. *Identity*, 14(4), 268-285.

Franz, C. E., & White, K. M. (1985). Individuation and attachment in personality development: Extending Erikson's theory. *Journal of personality*, 53(2), 224-256.

Gilleard, C., & Higgs, P. (2016). Connecting Life Span Development with the Sociology of the Life Course: A New Direction. *Sociology*, 50(2), 301-315.

Sneed, J. R., Schwartz, S. J., & Cross, Jr, W. E. (2006). A multicultural critique of identity status theory and research: A call for integration. *Identity*, 6(1), 61-84.

Sorell, G. T., & Montgomery, M. J. (2001). Feminist perspectives on Erikson's theory: Their relevance for contemporary identity development research. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 1(2), 97-128.

Honwana, A. (2014). Waithood": Youth transitions and social change. *Development and Equity: An Interdisciplinary Exploration by Ten Scholars from Africa, Asia and Latin America*, 28-40.

Hunter, S. V. (2010). Analysing and representing narrative data: The long and winding road. *Current Narratives*, 1(2), 44-54.

IMDi (2015). *Arbeidsinnvandring*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/sysselsetting-og-arbeidsliv/arbeidsinnvandring/>

IMDi (2015). *The Norwegian Settlement Model*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/en/settlement/norwegian-settlement-model/>

IMDi (2016). *Bedriftsetablering og entreprenørskap*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/sysselsetting-og-arbeidsliv/bedriftsetablering-og-entreprenørskap/>

IMDi (2016). *Intervjuordning*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/sysselsetting-og-arbeidsliv/intervjuordning/>

IMDi (2016). *The Introduction Program and Norwegian Language Training*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/en/introduction-act/introduction-programme-and-norwegian-language-training/>

IMDi (2016). *Tiltak i regi av NAV*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/sysselsetting-og-arbeidsliv/tiltak-i-regi-av-nav/>

IMDi (2017). *Jobbsjansen*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/sysselsetting-og-arbeidsliv/jobbsjansen/>

IMDi (2017). *Mentor- og traineeordninger*. Retrieved from <https://www.imdi.no/sysselsetting-og-arbeidsliv/mentor--og-traineeordninger/>

Kaufmann, P., Kuch, H., Neuhaeuser, C., & Webster, E. (Eds.). (2010). *Humiliation, degradation, dehumanization: human dignity violated* (Vol. 24). Springer Science & Business Media.

Koltko-Rivera, M. E. (2006). Rediscovering the later version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Self-transcendence and opportunities for theory, research, and unification. *Review of general psychology, 10*(4), 302.

Leppel, K., Brucker, E., & Cochran, J. (2012). The importance of job training to job satisfaction of older workers. *Journal of aging & social policy, 24*(1), 62-76.

Levinson, Daniel J. "A conception of adult development." *American psychologist 41.1* (1986): 3-13.

Maslow, A. H. (1954). Personality and motivation. *Harlow, England: Longman, 1*, 987.

McLeod, S. A. (2013). Erik Erikson\Psychosocial stages–Simply psychology.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2017). *Career*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/career>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2007). *Stricter Asylum Regulations in Norway*. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/immigration/asylum-regulations-in-norway/insight/stricter-asylum-regulations-in-norway/id2460759/>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2010). *Immigration Act*. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/immigration-act/id585772/>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2014). *Settlement of Refugees*. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/immigration/integrering/busetting-av-flyktningar/id2343754/>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2014). *The Norwegian Nationality Act*. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/immigration/integrering/statsborgerloven/id2343481/>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2016). *From reception center to labor market – an effective integration policy*. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/meld.-st.-30-20152016/id2499847/sec1>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2016). Necessary tightening of Norway's asylum rules. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/regjeringen---nodvendige-innstramninger/id2481689/>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2017). NOU 2017:2. Integration and trust – long-term consequences of high immigration. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/nou-2017-2/id2536701/sec1>

Ministry of Justice and Public Security (n.a.) *Integration*. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/immigration/integrering/id2343461/>

Modell, A. H. (1993). *The private self*. Harvard University Press. no

Morrice, L. (2013). Learning and refugees: Recognizing the darker side of transformative learning. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(3), 251-271.

Mundlak, G. (2007). The right to work: Linking human rights and employment policy. *International Labour Review*, 146(3-4), 189-215.

Næsheim, H. (2017). *Work – goal and arena for integration*. Retrieved from <http://www.ssb.no/en/arbeid-og-lonn/artikler-og-publikasjoner/work-goal-and-arena-for-integration>

Ndengeyingoma, A., Montigny, F. D., & Miron, J. M. (2014). Development of personal identity among refugee adolescents: Facilitating elements and obstacles. *Journal of child health care*, 18(4), 369-377.

NOKUT (2016). *NOKUT's Qualification Assessment for Refugees*. Retrieved from <http://www.nokut.no/en/News/News-2016/NOKUTs-Qualifications-Assessment-for-Refugees/#.WQNq9sZwnIU>

NOKUT (2016). *NOKUT's Qualification Passport's for Refugees*. Retrieved from <http://www.nokut.no/en/News/News-2016/NOKUTs-Qualifications-Passport-for-Refugees/#.WQNqlMZwnIU>

NOKUT (n.a.). *NOKUT's General recognition of higher education*. Retrieved from <http://www.nokut.no/en/Foreign-education/NOKUTs-general-recognition/>

NOKUT (n.d.). *Recognition Procedure for Persons without Verifiable Documentation (UVD-procedure)*. Retrieved from <http://www.nokut.no/en/Foreign-education/NOKUTs-general-recognition/Recognition-Procedure-for-Persons-without-Verifiable-Documentation/>

Ochse, R., & Plug, C. (1986). Cross-cultural investigation of the validity of Erikson's theory of personality development. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50(6), 1240.

Ogata S. (1992). "Fortress Europe? Refugees and migrants: their human rights and dignity". Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/admin/hcspeeches/3ae68fcd34/fortress-europe-refugees-migrants-human-rights-dignity-statement-mrs-sadako.html>

Østby L. (2016) *Refugees in Norway*. Report for Norwegian Statistics. Retrieved from <http://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/artikler-og-publikasjoner/refugees-in-norway>

Oxford Dictionaries (2017). *Identity*. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/identity>

Riley M. (1979) Adulthood in a Life Cycle. Review of Adulthood by Erik Erikson. *Contemporary Sociology*, 8(4), 543-546

Rosenthal, D. A., Gurney, R. M., & Moore, S. M. (1981). From trust on intimacy: A new inventory for examining Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 10(6), 525-537.

Slater, C.L. (2003) Generativity Versus Stagnation: An Elaboration of Erikson's Adult Stage of Human Development. *Journal of Adult Development* 10(1). 53-65.
doi:10.1023/A:1020790820868

SSB. (2016). *Two in ten refugees have higher education*. Retrieved from <https://www.ssb.no/en/utdanning/statistikker/utniv/aar/2016-06-20>

SSB. (2016). *Attitudes towards immigrants and immigration*. Retrieved from <https://www.ssb.no/en/innvhold>

The Constitution, as laid down on 17 May 1814 by the Constituent Assembly at Eidsvoll and subsequently amended, most recently in May 2016. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www.stortinget.no/en/In-English/About-the-Storting/The-Constitution/>

Thorud E., Haug-Moberg T., Galloway T., Skårn S., Rafoss E.M., Bendiksby R., Naustdal A.H., Girolami P.B., Knudsen T., & Kjaerner-Semb J., (2015-2016). *Immigrants and Immigration*. IMO report for Norway. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/innvandring-og-innvandraraar-20152016/id2527673/>

Tønnesvang, J. (2012). Identity, self and motivation: Steps towards an integrative approach. *Nordic Psychology*, 64(4), 228-241.

UDI (n.a.). *The UN Refugee Convention*. Retrieved from <https://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/the-un-refugee-convention/>

UDI (n.a.). *Permanent resident permit*. Retrieved from <https://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/permanent-residence-permit/>

UDI (n.a.). *Protection (asylum)*. Retrieved from <https://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/protection/>

UDI (n.a.). *Refugee*. Retrieved from <https://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/refugee/>

UDI (n.a.). *You have been granted protection (asylum) in Norway*. Retrieved from <https://www.udi.no/en/received-an-answer/protection-asylum/your-application-for-protection-has-been-granted/#link-1295>

Vaillant, G. E., & Milofsky, E. (1980). Natural history of male psychological health: IX. Empirical evidence for Erikson's model of the life cycle. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*.

Verkuyten, M., & Nekuee, S. (2001). Self-Esteem, Discrimination, and Coping Among Refugees: The Moderating Role of Self-Categorization. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 31(5), 1058-1075.

Weber, K., & Ladkin, A. (2011). Career identity and its relation to career anchors and career satisfaction: The case of convention and exhibition industry professionals in Asia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(2), 167-182.

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Interview Guide for Highly Individuals with a Refugee Background in Norway

1. Age
2. Gender
3. When did you move to Norway? How old were you?
4. Did you travel alone or with your family?
5. If moved as an adult, what did you do for a living before seeking asylum in Norway?

Educational background

6. What is the highest level of education you received?
7. Receiving education in Norway: what were the challenges?
8. Where did you receive your primary, secondary education? How old were you when you first entered an educational establishment in Norway?
9. Was it challenging for you to study in Norwegian? Overall, how many languages do you know?
10. Generally, was education process an important part of your integration?
11. Did you like to attend the educational establishment? Have you felt accepted by your classmates/teachers?
12. During the education process, have it ever seemed to you that there are prejudices towards you, and your abilities as a student?
13. How important was it to you to be a good student, to get good grades? Have you ever felt that you have to put more efforts into your education than non-refugee students do?

Employment and discrimination

14. What is your current employment status?
15. If you are currently employed, are you satisfied with the job? Is the job relevant to your education and your professional experience?
16. If not working, what is the reason/ are the reasons?
17. Do you wish to find a job relevant to your education/ experience?
18. What is your experience with applying for jobs, particularly skilled/well-paid jobs? Do you find it challenging?

19. As a refugee, do you think your background makes you less attractive to the employer?
Have you ever experienced prejudices towards you, your skills or education, while applying for jobs?
20. Have you ever had to settle for a minor, unskilled job, just to provide for yourself (your family)?
21. As a refugee, have you ever felt that your education is less appreciated? Have you ever felt that there are prejudices towards the quality of your education?
22. Do you believe that your opportunities are equal to the career possibilities of those with non-refugee background?
23. In any way, has the job seeking experience in Norway been infringing to your dignity/ self-esteem?
24. Have you ever felt discriminated, or has your dignity ever been hurt during your job seeking experiences?

Importance of career in life

25. Does your employment status affect your other spheres of life? Your family, health, mental condition?
26. Is a job a way of self-actualization for you? Or rather, is salary a priority to you?
27. What role does professional realization play in your life? Is it important to you to be professionally successful?
 - a. Will successful career make you feel more integrated to Norway?
28. Is salary / social protection important for you? Does lack of it affect your everyday life?
29. How inability to work within the profession affects your life, identity, self-esteem?

NAV Representative Interview Guide

1. Do highly educated refugees find job relevant to their education and training?
2. What is the role of NAV in the Introduction Program?
3. In your opinion, how important is career and professional actualization in life of adult refugees?
4. What role does motivation processes play in guidance and counseling of refugees?
5. In your opinion, how important it is for Norwegians economics to employ refugees?



Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelig universitet
Noregs miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet
Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Postboks 5003
NO-1432 Ås
Norway